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The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs has provided the attached documents as responsive to your request. There are no fees for processing this request in this instance.

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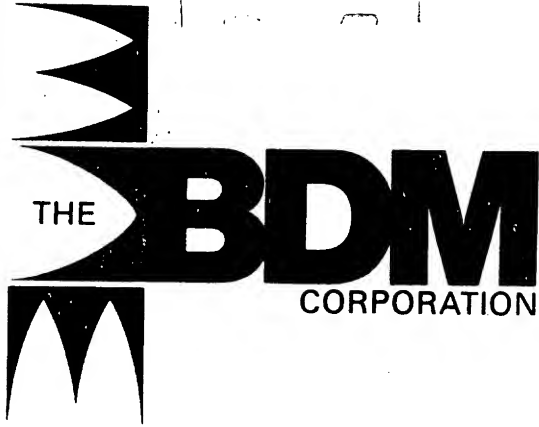
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CHINESE ASSESSMENT OF THE SUPERPOWER RELATIONSHIP

1972-1974

#911





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CHINESE ASSESSMENT OF THE SUPERPOWER RELATIONSHIP

1972-1974





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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

The interaction of the United States and Soviet Union is a powerful international political phenomenon which compels a great deal of the output of third-country policy processes. This seems to be particularly true in the case of the Chinese, whose policy process has been continually occupied since its inception with the task of adjusting to changes in the superpower relationship.

The research summarized in this report was designed to illuminate the process by which the Chinese draw policy relevant conclusions from their observation of Soviet-U.S. interaction. More than appreciation of the importance of the superpower relationship, an understanding of the Chinese evaluation process should better equip analysts to anticipate Chinese reaction to American or Soviet moves, and should increase the U.S. policymaker's awareness of his own influence upon Chinese decision making.

This research has addressed three key questions:

1. To what arenas of superpower competition are the Chinese most sensitive?
2. By what standards do Chinese observers evaluate the competition?
3. What are the linkages between these arenas and Chinese domestic policy arenas?

B. LINKAGES

The third question above is the first to be addressed. At the outset of this research program it was hypothesized that a few specific arenas of superpower interaction would be directly linked to corresponding internal arenas. Thus, for example, it was expected that the Chinese would debate the state of Soviet-American strategic arms competition, with the debate having direct consequences for Chinese strategic weapons programs.

Research has revealed quite a different "structure" through which perceptions of superpower interaction are input into the Chinese policy process. There is an intermediate node in the structure which this report refers to as the "macro model of superpower interaction" (See Figure 1-1). This macro model essentially represents a net assessment process. Evidence from the several arenas of superpower competition is aggregated into the macro-model and this single model is, in turn, input into several domestic issue arenas.

Because the elites who participate in debate over the content of this model are themselves hostage to these internal policy arenas, and because superpower competition in any arena may impact (through the macro model) upon any domestic arena, one often encounters unlikely men as advocates of one or another interpretation of superpower interaction. Were the same process in effect in the U.S. one might find the Secretaries of Labor and the Interior, rather than the Secretaries of State and Defense, as the primary opponents in a debate on Soviet objectives in SALT.

#### C. STANDARDS

The Chinese do not measure power only in objective terms: inventories and throw-weights are but one aspect of power. Of equal importance is "will" -- or, in the Chinese phraseology, "subjective initiative". Subjective initiative makes possible the triumph of a small army over a large one, or of a quantitatively inferior nuclear force over a superior one.

Briefly stated, the Chinese now credit the Soviet with physical superiority and the Americans -- especially in the person of Secretary Schlesinger -- with superior subjective initiative.

#### D. SUPERPOWER ARENAS

During the three-year period 1972-1974, the Chinese press and radio reflected a preoccupation with eight rather specific arenas of superpower interaction. Superpower behavior in three military arenas (strategic arms/

SALT, general purpose forces/MBFR, and naval forces) and five geographic arenas (Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and Latin America) provided most of the evidence for an intense 36 months of debate over the net assessment of superpower competition.

In general, arenas appear to have been selected more for their continuous, high-level yield of data on the superpower relationship than for their direct impact upon Chinese security interests. Such a pattern of selection is consistent with the process outlined above under "Linkages". SALT and MBFR, of course, have a direct impact upon Chinese security, but one is hard pressed to imagine an arena more remote than Latin America; and few arenas are of greater importance than Northeast Asia, where superpower interaction receives very little attention.

#### E. CONTENTION AND COLLUSION

The most important (and most often debated) "variable" in the macro model might be labelled "Essence of the Superpower Relationship". Debate over this variable is reduced to an argument between "contentionists" -- i.e., those who see contention as the essential feature of superpower interaction -- and "collusionists" -- those who see collusion as the relationship's essence. It is the course of this contention-collusion debate which provides the best indicator of changes in Chinese assessment of superpower competition.

During the 1972-1974 period, the contentionist model of superpower interaction usually dominated; instances of a dominant collusionist model were episodic. However, it is the three collusionist interruptions of the contentionist domination that are of greatest interest. The rise and collapse of each collusionist interlude may be seen as turning points in the net assessment of U.S.-USSR interaction; each turning point represents a response by the Chinese policy process to specific behavior on the part of the United States or Soviet Union.

The year 1972 began with the collusionists on top. Announcements in 1971 of the forthcoming signing of the May 1972 SALT agreement had outweighed



America's "tilt toward Pakistan" in the December 1971 South Asian war, and the "collusionists" (who opposed the upcoming visit of President Nixon) temporarily prevailed over the contentionists (who endorsed the visit). However, the Nixon visit in February and the Shanghai Communique effectively destroyed the collusionist case, and a contentionist model of U.S.-USSR relations prevailed for the next several months.

The May 1972 SALT accord apparently caused the Chinese net assessment process to boggle; it was not until more than a month after the signing that the Chinese leadership put forth an official policy statement. It was not until October that the collusionists succeeded in overcoming the contentionists and advanced a collusionist macro model of the relationship, based upon the May agreement and upon Washington and Moscow's handling of the agreement.

This resurgence of the collusionist model was reversed in early 1973, but this time as a result of Chinese internal political developments. Preparations and maneuvering for the August 1973 Tenth Party Congress occupied the Chinese leadership until the early autumn and commentary on the superpower relationship became very infrequent.

After the conclusion of the Party Congress (August 24-28) the collusionist theme reappeared, but it had clearly been circumscribed by agreements reached at the congress. Nonetheless, collusionist stock rose as the October 1973 Middle East war unfolded. Soviet and U.S. involvement in the war and, in particular, the joint U.S.-USSR ceasefire proposal were "obvious" instances of collusion. On October 25, the U.S. worldwide military alert was implemented, and the collusionist model was utterly destroyed. The alert profoundly influenced Chinese perception of the superpowers and gave rise to the belief that the U.S., while inferior in muscle, had "subjective initiative".

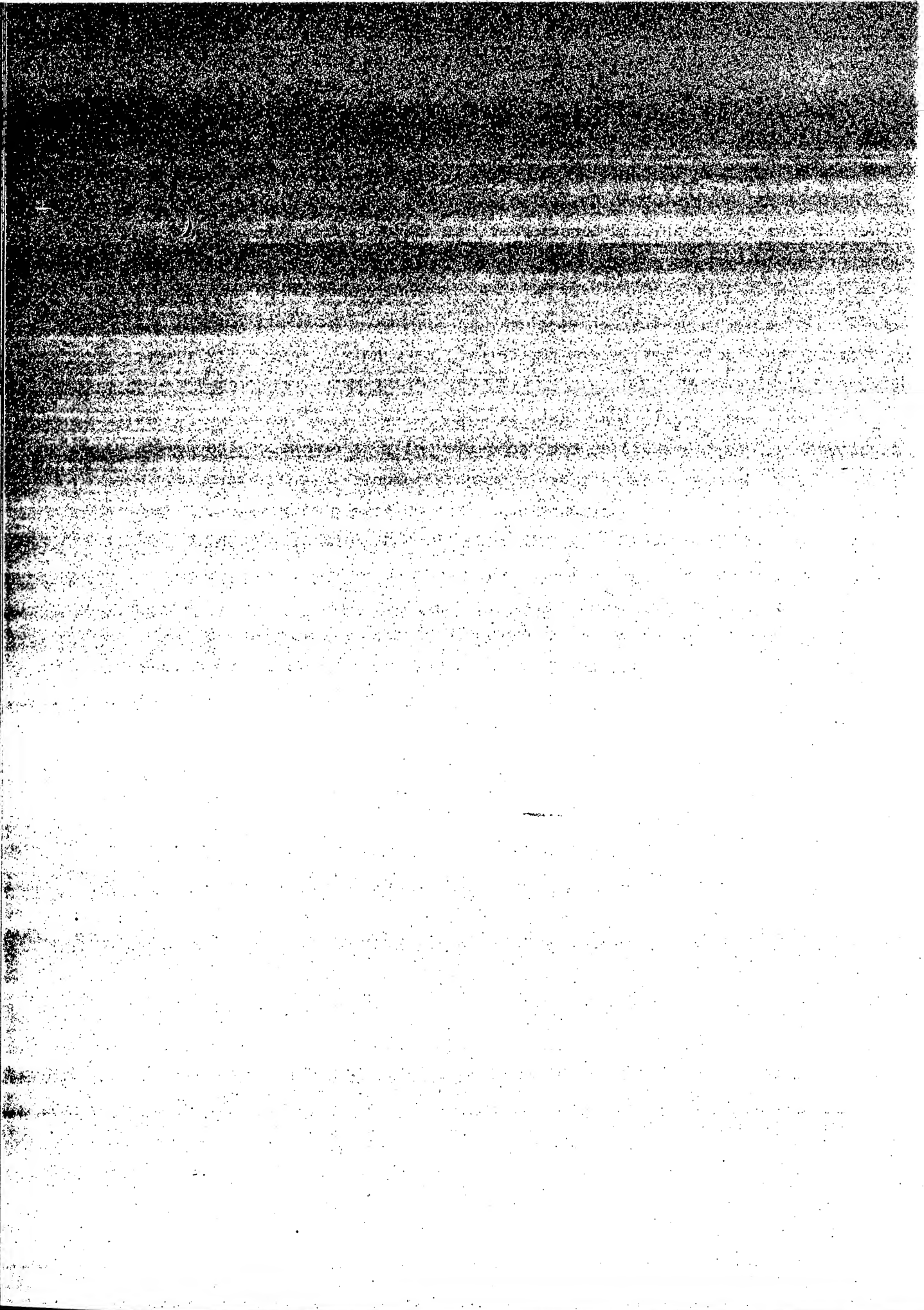
In the aftermath of the alert, Chinese debate shifted to new issues such as the inevitability of war between the superpowers, and the implications of such a war for "the revolution".

F. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

An obvious conclusion which emerges from this research is that the Chinese are sensitive to U.S. behavior across a broad spectrum of international issues. America's interaction with the Soviet Union in an obvious arena -- such as SALT or Northeast Asia -- does not necessarily impact more heavily upon Chinese policy making than does superpower competition in Latin America or the Middle East, where the Chinese have no vital security interests.

A second, and equally important, conclusion is that Chinese sensitivity is rather low. As one would expect, domestic politics dominates the political process, and only the most dramatic developments in the superpower relationship impact without attenuation on the Chinese policy maker.

Nonetheless, there are certain features in U.S. behavior which do influence the Chinese on a continuing basis. Most conspicuous among these are the policy statements issued by Secretary Schlesinger. Probably because physical superiority is conceded to the Soviets, and a superiority of will is credited to the Americans, the Chinese independently assess Soviet capabilities, but closely monitor Secretary Schlesinger's commentary for evidence of America's "subjective initiative".



CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

This document is a report on research conducted by The BDM Corporation on Chinese elite assessments of the Soviet-American relationship. The chapters which follow will discuss a variety of subjects subordinate to the primary question: "How do Chinese elites assess superpower competition?"

Of key importance will be the discernment of the patterns according to which Chinese observers select or ignore specific information on the superpower relationship in order to create for themselves simplified models of the competition. The study focuses upon two general areas within which this selection process operates. The first concerns the selection of specific arenas of superpower competition. Of all the ways in which the superpowers interact, which arenas of interaction are of greatest importance to Chinese elite observers? In other words, to what kinds of competition are the Chinese most sensitive? The second general type of selection occurs within each of these arenas. Having focused his attention upon a given arena, by what standard does the Chinese observer measure the state of the competition?

In addition to establishing these patterns of selection and evaluation, the study also explains how the Chinese input their conclusions on the superpower competition into a broader policy process. The superpower relationship impacts upon a wide range of Chinese domestic and foreign policy decisions, and this study seeks to illuminate both the pervasiveness of the superpower issue in Chinese politics and the specific way in which it impacts upon selected policy decisions.

Implicit in this overview discussion is an assumption that the Chinese political process is a factional one. This report treats the "faction" question in two different ways. At times, the "conventional wisdom" on the subject is drawn upon, as we discuss the ways in which generalized

groups (e.g., radicals and conservatives, soldiers and civilians, northerners and southerners) divide on the issue of superpower competition. At other times, however, the study applies its own factional scheme to the analysis of the data. This scheme rests upon the understanding that Chinese factions are fluid, rather than permanently structured. Each major issue has its own specific factional alignment -- an alignment which cuts across conventional factional boundaries. Therefore, the different views expressed on a particular policy issue may be viewed as the "platforms" of the different factions on that issue. In other words, the study employs an operational definition of factions; and the factional scheme developed in this manner does not often resemble conventional schemes.

This study argues that superpower competition is more than a construct of the political scientist's mind; it is also a very powerful international political phenomenon which compels a great deal of the output of third-country policy processes. This seems to be particularly true in the case of the Chinese, whose policy process has been continually occupied since its inception with the task of adjusting to changes in the superpower balance. China's external environment remains as bipolar today as it was at any time during the Cold War. The superpowers may speak of multi-polar but, for the Chinese elite, or for the leadership of any other nation in which the vital interests of the superpowers intersect, multi-polarity is still a fiction.

The importance of understanding the manner in which Chinese leaders assess and respond to superpower interaction is obvious. First, accuracy in prediction ought to be enhanced. Not only should the analyst be better equipped to predict Chinese reaction to developments in the US-USSR relationship, but he should be more accurate in anticipating adjustments in Chinese leadership balances -- adjustments which are the consequences of specific superpower behavior which destroys, vindicates, or otherwise impacts upon the domestic political position of one or another faction in the Chinese leadership. Second, assuming that this research will serve to make the US policy maker more self-conscious with regard to the implicit messages he



conveys to the Chinese while dealing "bilaterally" with the USSR, the study ought to enhance the planner's ability to consciously signal, if not influence, the Chinese policy process as it responds to developments in the superpower relationship.

B. IMPACT OF SUPERPOWER COMPETITION ON CHINESE POLITICS: A STRUCTURE

1. Dynamics of the Process

At the outset of this research program, it was hypothesized that Chinese political leaders are sensitive to superpower interaction in a few specific arenas, and that each of these arenas corresponds to a rather discrete set of internal Chinese political issues. Thus, for example, it was expected that the Chinese would debate the state of Soviet-American strategic arms competition, with the debate having direct consequences for Chinese strategic weapons programs. Similarly, it was expected that superpower interaction in the energy resource arena would impact more or less directly upon Chinese energy policies.

However, the research has revealed quite a different "structure" through which perceptions of superpower interaction are input into the Chinese policy-making process. As anticipated, there are a few (eight) specific arenas of interaction to which the Chinese are especially sensitive. (These arenas are identified and discussed in greater detail below.) However, there is little evidence to support the originally hypothesized direct linkage between these arenas and specific Chinese policy issues. Instead, it appears that perceptions derived from the monitoring of these eight arenas are fed through a net assessment process into what might be termed a "macro-model" of the superpower relationship. This macro-model, in turn, provides an all-important theoretical framework for the resolution of other Chinese policy issues. Figure 1-1 is a notional diagram of this process.

The research summarized in this report has been directed primarily toward the left half of the structure outlined in Figure 1-1 -- i.e., on the process by which evidence is extracted from the eight arenas of superpower

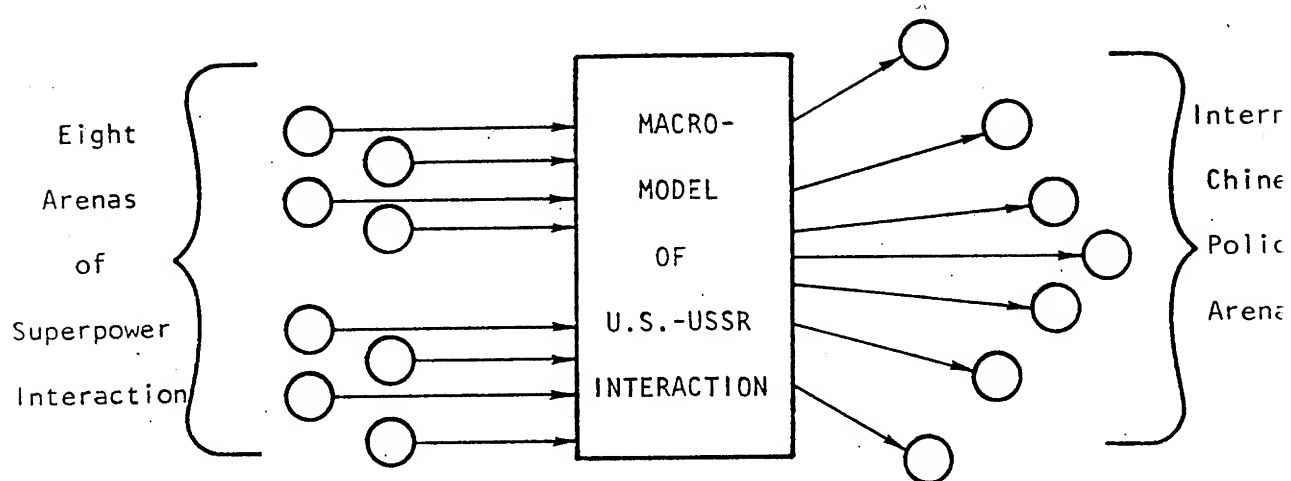


Figure 1-1. The "Net Assessment" Process

interaction and incorporated into a "net assessment," or "macro-model," of the relationship.

Considered in isolation from Chinese internal politics, this net assessment process would appear most irrational. The logic which determines the importance of a given superpower arena, and which determines the relative impact of specific developments within that arena, is a domestic political logic. To "rationalize" the left half of Figure 1-1, one must recognize that many of the Chinese commentators quoted in this report have their careers invested in one or two internal policy arenas -- i.e., in the right half of the figure. Their interests in these domestic arenas dictate a "preferred" macro-model of U.S.-USSR interaction. As a consequence, they do not bring objectivity to the task of analyzing the superpowers; instead, they appear to pluck from any superpower arena any evidence which supports their "preferred" model.

As a consequence of all this, an attempt has been made to incorporate into this report a general discussion of domestic political imperatives and motivations. For the most part, this discussion is based upon other research projects which have been conducted by individual members of the BDM research team. No effort has been made to exhaust the subject of internal political forces which skew the net assessment process; rather, the intent has been to present just enough material on this subject to make the primary subject -- the net assessment process -- comprehensible.

## 2. The Macro-Model of U.S.-USSR Interaction

The role of the macro-model is somewhat analogous to the National Security Study Memorandum or National Intelligence Estimate in the U.S. policy-making process. This is not to imply that it is an official document, but simply that it provides an essentially official theoretical or ideological framework for decision making. The model may be thought of as a set of parameters which define the present state of the superpower relationship. And, given its pervasiveness in the internal policy-making process, it is only natural that its maintenance and adjustment should be the object of much Chinese political debate.

This research program focuses upon the process by which these adjustments are made, and the chapters which follow this introduction are



intended to illuminate the manner in which adjustments were made in response to specific acts on the part of the superpowers. In essence, the process consists of the selection of data on superpower interaction from the eight arenas, and the application of this data to the macro-model. For example one faction might conclude that the signing of a SALT agreement in the strategic arms arena is evidence of superpower collusion. This faction would, in turn, press for revision of the macro-model to reflect the superpower relationship as somewhat more collusive than had been the case.

However, to pursue this same example, a macro-model adjusted in the direction of greater collusion would have wide-ranging impact in domestic policy discussions; for "collusion" carries profound implications for several internal issue arenas. (These implications are discussed in greater detail below.) It could therefore be expected that a political battle, based primarily upon domestic political imperatives, would be joined between those who would benefit and those who would suffer as a consequence of the proposed adjustment to the overriding theoretical framework of policy making. Conceivably, the debate over superpower competition in the strategic arms arena would be carried out primarily by elites whose political domain is totally irrelevant -- substantively -- to strategic arms.

The phenomena hypothesized in this example are precisely those which have been confirmed by this research program. It appears that each Chinese observer has a "preferred" macro-model -- "preferred" not on the basis of objective analysis of superpower competition, but rather on the basis of its implications for his own political programs or domain. As a consequence, an observer sensitive to these implications seems to monitor any arena of superpower competition which is likely to yield evidence in support of his "preferred" model.

What arises from this is a set of eight high-interest arenas which are valued by the Chinese not primarily for their direct impact upon Chinese national security, but rather for their high yield of evidence on the essence of superpower competition. Indeed, as will be pointed out in a later chapter the Latin American arena became extremely important in Chinese debate over

the superpower relationship, despite the fact that Latin America itself was of very little importance to the debaters.

3. The Chinese Concept of "Power"

It should not be concluded from the preceding discussion that it is an utterly dishonest process by which the Chinese evaluate Soviet-American interaction. That personal political considerations can prevail over objectivity is but one aspect of the process. It is one operative factor, but perhaps not to any greater extent than is the case in other major countries. It can be assumed that leaders who advance self-serving policies more often than not believe that the general interest is best served when their own interests are well served.

A second factor critical to understanding the process by which the macro-model is developed and revised is the unique Chinese view of what constitutes power. A digression adequate to the task of thoroughly expounding this idea would not be appropriate to this report, but a few essentials should be noted.

The Chinese do not measure power only -- or even primarily -- in objective terms: inventories, throw-weights, gross national products, and square miles are not necessarily the prime ingredients of power. In their view, the most critical aspects of power are subjective. In the direct exercise of power, the size of the resources one possesses is not as important as the strength of one's "subjective initiative" (chu-kuan neng-tung-hsing) -- a concept roughly equivalent to "will". It is the strength of "subjective initiative", for example, that makes possible the triumph of People's War over physically stronger forces, and that provides a rationale for the declaration that atomic weapons are "paper tigers". Furthermore, in the pervasive struggle for influence (that is, power without direct use of force), one's power is neither more nor less than it is perceived to be by those one wishes to influence. In this contest for influence, resources and even "subjective initiative" have no weight unless a respect for them, and for the other characteristics that go to make up influence, can be imparted. A superpower without the ability to influence would be a superpower

in name only -- or would have to fall back on the naked use of its physical resources and subjective initiative to redress its disadvantageous situation.

One of the interesting implications of this view of influence is that Soviet or American power can be altered in ways entirely independent of their physical resources or even their will: as a result of behavior on the part of the superpowers which alters third-country perceptions of their power, or as a result of fourth-country (e.g., Chinese) efforts to persuade third countries to perceive the superpowers differently. Later chapters will discuss the alteration of superpower influence by both these methods.

#### 4. Eight Arenas of Superpower Competition

During the three-year period 1972-1974, the Chinese press and radio reflected a preoccupation with eight rather specific arenas of superpower competition. Three arenas that received frequent attention may be grouped together under the rubric "military capabilities": strategic nuclear weapons and SALT, general-purpose forces, and naval forces. Comparisons of superpower strength and evaluations of the competition within these three arenas are usually done at an abstract level, centering neither on weapons inventories and deployment levels nor on specific geographic areas. Strategic arms and general purpose forces are in many cases dealt with together, partly because of the obvious trade-offs between nuclear and conventional weapons and partly because of the "zero-sum" implications of the two arenas together for Chinese security.

The five remaining arenas are geographic. Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean received a high level of attention during the three-year period. Since Europe functions as a "second front" to divert Soviet attention from China, it is not surprising that the state of Soviet-American competition in Europe should be a matter of great concern to the Chinese. However, the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Indian Ocean areas -- along with the eighth arena, Latin America -- receive attention far out of proportion to their direct importance for Chinese national security. The reason is that each of these distant arenas yields a

continuous high volume of evidence of the overall nature of superpower competition, and serves well in the process of debating and revising the macro-model.

In support of the earlier contention that various arenas are monitored more for their impact upon the macro-model than for their direct relevance to Chinese security, let it be noted that the press and radio rarely comment upon Soviet-US competition in Northeast Asia, despite the fact that superpower competition there must surely be the object of the liveliest concern within the Chinese leadership. When dealing with the Asian region, it is customary to refrain from suggesting that the superpowers are competing there. Instead, Soviet involvement there, like American involvement, is treated separately, with no linking of the superpowers. Similarly, Soviet activity in South Asia is often discussed without reference to the U.S., and U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia is not linked to superpower interaction.

Explicit linkages among the eight key arenas are common. Thus, general purpose forces are frequently mentioned in connection with Europe, and naval forces are often linked with the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean arenas -- and, in some cases, with the Middle East and Latin America.

Like the Asian arena, the economic arena of superpower competition would seem to be of critical importance to the Chinese. However, the economic activities of the U.S. and USSR, like their activities in Asia, are usually treated in such a way as to avoid the implication of competition. The important problem of competition for oil resources is mentioned occasionally, but the subject is seldom pursued.

##### 5. Characteristics of the Macro-Model

As suggested earlier, use of the term "macro-model" may imply a degree of sophistication (both in our understanding of the phenomenon and in the Chinese policy process) which is not at all justified; the term is really just a shorthand expression for what seems to be a very subjective, but widely understood (among the Chinese elite) characterization of the superpower relationship. One might think of the macro-model as the "party line" on the superpowers, but the utility of that analogy is certainly limited.

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At the risk of once again implying an unwarranted degree of precision, it might be suggested that the macro-model is analogous to a multi-variate formula, with each variable representing a key aspect of the superpower relationship. At any one time, each of the variables has a specific value, and the decision maker is provided with a clear, "for-planning-purposes" picture of the superpowers.

Before setting aside this heuristic analogy, it would be useful to summarize the process by which the model is adjusted, this time in terms of the multi-variate formula notion. One of the variables might be labeled "Essence of the Relationship", and its value at any one time would lie somewhere on a scale which ranges from "Collusion" to "Contention". Thus the macro-model might reflect that the superpower relationship is 80% contention and 20% collusion. But the signing of a SALT agreement would be strong evidence of superpower collusion, and the model might consequently be altered, say to 70% contention and 30% collusion.

The numbers are irrelevant and have no referents in the real world; what is important is the concept of variables within the macro-model. A number of the variables, or parameters, which the Chinese seem to view as the component parts of the superpower relationship are discussed below. Most variables may be thought of as essentially independent from each other, and therefore subject to alteration without a fundamental revision of the entire model. Naturally, some variables are considerably more important than others, and their revision does imply a drastic alteration of the overall model. Thus, the model of superpower competition may switch from "non-zero-sum" to "zero-sum" without changing in most other respects; but a switch from contention to collusion would be a profound one, and the entire model would be subject to revision. Similarly, whether the competition is zero-sum or non-zero-sum is probably not of critical importance in most internal policy arenas, but the contention-collusion controversy implies upon a wide range of policy decisions and programs. Some of these implications, along with a few of the more interesting variables, are discussed below.

6. Key Aspects of Superpower Competition: The Variables

The one aspect of the superpower relationship most often debated in Chinese open sources is its "essence": is the relationship one of contention, or collusion? The political implications of these two words are considerable, and virtually every commentator on the relationship selects one or the other word from this brace as the central theme of his argument. By virtue of their importance in other policy arenas, each of these words has acquired over the past few years a rather clearly defined set of associated meanings. They are, in short, the "buzz words" of Chinese strategic debate, carrying with them the same order of implication which Americans have enveloped in the terms "parity" and "superiority".

An understanding of the contention-collusion dichotomy is essential to the analysis of motivations which underlie Chinese political debate. The observer who characterizes the superpowers as either contending or colluding says a great deal about his own political goals, his views on a variety of related issues, and, in general, his estimate of the domestic political milieu in which he operates. A few "axioms" regarding the domestic implications of these two words are outlined in the next section, after a brief discussion of some of the second-order variables used to characterize the relationship and of this study's scheme for portraying Chinese political factions.

Contention between the superpowers may take two distinct forms: it may be zero-sum, or non-zero-sum. In zero-sum contention, each gain by one power entails a corresponding loss by the other, and one may "win" either by advancing one's own position or by undermining one's opponent. Zero-sum competition can thus be most unsportsmanlike, for one power's objectives may be either "positive" (with respect to itself) or "negative" (with respect to the other power). In non-zero-sum competition, one power's gains are not necessarily the other power's losses, and one "wins" simply by accumulating more "points" than one's opponent.

An interesting variation of the zero-sum model, which does have correspondence in the real world, is the case in which the competition

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centers on only one power's security interests, with that power trying to advance them and the other power trying to undermine them. The "other power's" interests are not at stake, and he has "strategic initiative" while his opponent, whose security interests are at stake, is "strategical passive".

Contention may also take three other forms, none of which is inconsistent with either the zero-sum or the non-zero-sum feature. Contentions may be: a conscious effort by both powers to engage in a contest; an occasional encounter by two powers pursuing their essentially non-competitive interests; or a continuous state of affairs which the logic of history forces upon the powers, regardless of their conscious desires either to contend or not to contend.

Collusion may take four distinct forms: a conscious effort on the part of both powers to work toward the attainment of a long-term goal that serves the interests of both; an occasional commonality of interests that occurs while each power pursues separate aims; a state of affairs that arises spontaneously, but regularly, out of the logic of history and the nature of the two powers; or a pandering by one power to the interests of the other in one area concurrent with the pursuit of policies detrimental to the interests of the other in a different, more important, area. In the last form, collusion is something of a sham, a strategy of deceit used by one colluder against the other.

A fifth form of collusion warrants separate attention. It is deemed collusion when two powers irrevocably forced to compete decide to cooperate in halting their slide into confrontation. In a sense, they are colluding against the logic of history; and such collusion is both despicable and doomed to failure.

These variations on the terms "contention" and "collusion" allow for their employment in a wide range of ideological and pragmatic maneuvers. The data of 1972-1974 indicates that the Chinese are capable of employing virtually all of these possibilities over a relatively short period of time.

There is another, broader question related to the contention-collusion argument which divides political factions by virtue of its implications for Chinese policy. That is the question of the superpower relationship's relevance for China -- or, in other terms, China's proper relationship to the superpower relationship. Contention may be seen either as focusing on China as the prize of the contention, or as directed elsewhere. Collusion may be viewed as collusion against Chinese interests, or collusion aimed at some other common goal. Those who believe (or hope) that China is excluded from the superpower interaction argue differently from those who see a potential for Chinese participation in, or influence on, the superpower relationship.

Differences over this question result in the asking of different sets of questions and in differing interpretations of "answers" to the same questions. For example, "who's winning" the superpower competition is of continuing importance to those who see the superpowers contending in such a way that one will get the upper hand and turn its attention to dealing with China. To those who believe that "collusion" is the essence of American-Soviet interaction, the question of "who's winning" is meaningless. For those with a view of history sufficiently long and ideological to permit focusing on the inevitable defeat of both imperialism and social imperialism, the whole question of the superpower relationship is of dubious relevance.

#### 7. An Operational Definition of Chinese Political Factions

Considering all the variables comprised by the macro-model, the number of possible permutations representing positions on the superpower issue is considerable. But, despite the fact that almost every permutation has at one time or another been given voice in the Chinese media, the number of permutations which habitually reappear during public debate on the superpower issue is relatively small. This small set encompasses a wide range of views on the competition, and it naturally suggests itself as a basis upon which to operationally define Chinese political factions.

What this study does, in effect, is to let the public commentary which emerges from Chinese political debate guide the definition of factions



on the issue at hand. Factions defined in this manner are issue-specific, and do not necessarily coincide with the factions which form around other issues. In fact, to the extent that the study has been able to identify the members of each operationally-defined faction, it has revealed alliances among elements who would not likely be linked in any a priori definition of factions.

As the earlier discussion of "variables" suggests, the major factional division on the superpower issue is between "contentionists" and "collusionists". Neither of these groups is coincident with any conventionally defined faction, nor is the membership of either group changeless over time. The two groups are essentially temporary alliances of small factions, some of whom see the question of superpower contention or collusion as a real one, relevant to their particular concerns, and others of whom find one or the other term a convenient stick for beating political opponents with whom they disagree in other areas.

Each of these smaller factions in the alliances represent different permutations of variables secondary to the collusion-contention variable. Thus, there occasionally arises heated debate within the contentionist or collusionist coalition, this debate focusing upon such issues as whether the superpowers are contending for China, or whether a particular incident of collusion on the part of the superpowers is intentional or accidental.

#### 8. Internal Political Implications of the Variables

The political implications of different versions of the macro-model to a great extent determine which faction and which major alliance an individual will identify with. This section of the study outlines these implications in five representative policy arenas.

a. China's Role in the External World. "Contention" between the superpowers, unless it is contention for China, implies that there is space for Chinese maneuver between the US and USSR -- i.e., China can play "balance of power" politics or two versions of "two on one". Superpower "collusion" excludes China from such a role and calls instead for a Third World strategy.

b. Sino-Soviet War. "Contention" denies the likelihood of a Soviet attack on China, at least until the Soviets dispose of their primary opponent. "Collusion", on the other hand, paints a grim picture of China's threat environment. A colluding US could hardly be expected to stay Moscow's hand and risk a direct superpower confrontation.

c. Regime Orientation. "Contention", unless it is so high-powered as to exclude third parties from influence, invites Chinese concentration on foreign affairs. In other words, it tends to support a regime oriented toward the external world. "Collusion", however, is more consistent with an internally oriented regime, one more concerned with nation-building or soul-saving than with international affairs.

d. Military Strategy. When the superpowers contend, Peking is able to clearly order its threats. By implication, the Soviet Union becomes the "primary adversary", and the US is relegated to a secondary role. Such a dual adversary environment allows for defense resources to be concentrated on regional nuclear weapons and modern general purpose forces. Naturally, these latter forces would be concentrated in the northern military regions (against the primary threat) and would consist primarily of ground and air forces.

Two colluding superpowers present quite a different threat environment -- one which demands a single adversary strategy. Such a strategy necessarily requires the use of global nuclear weapons instead of modernized conventional forces. The result would be a combination of regional and global nuclear weapons, on the one hand, and an impoverished people's war conventional force, on the other. Deployments would no longer be concentrated only in the North, but would be divided among the northern, eastern, and southern fronts.

e. Level of External Relations. The Chinese have explicitly defined "contention" to mean, among other things, the violation of national sovereignty. In contrast, "collusion" entails the oppression of the people of the world.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, "contention" is consistent with a Chinese preference for state-to-state dealings and international alliances. "Col-

clusion" argues for a Chinese policy of people-to-people dealings and the support of revolutionary movements.

C. SUMMARY

This study is intended to illuminate the process by which Chinese political elites evaluate Soviet-American competition and the process by which these evaluations are incorporated into Chinese policy-making. Research uncovered, and subsequently focused on, an intermediate step in this process, referred to in this study as "net assessment" of superpower competition.

The overall process appears to follow these general steps:

1. Specific "arenas" of superpower competition are monitored by the Chinese whose policies or programs are affected by superpower interaction. Out of the large number of such arenas of interaction, the Chinese appear to give greatest attention to eight. These eight are seemingly chosen more for their potential yield of evidence than for their direct impact upon Chinese security.

2. Evidence of the nature and state of superpower competition -- derived from these eight arenas -- is employed in wide-ranging debate on the overall state of superpower competition. This debate has the effect of revising what has been termed the "macro-model". The model functions as an overriding theoretical framework within which a large number of international political issues must be resolved.

3. Because the model impacts upon such a wide range of policies and programs, its maintenance or adjustment is critical to most members of the political elite. Therefore, considerable energy is devoted to debate on the several variables which the model comprises.

Positions taken by various commentators on superpower competition have been employed as the differentiae in a scheme by which issue-specific factions have been defined. A two-faction scheme envisions "contentionists" pitted

against "collusionists". A multi-faction scheme rests upon delineation of subgroups on the basis of their views on secondary aspects of superpower interaction. The acceptance of five "axioms" regarding the implications of "contention" and "collusion" simplifies the task of hypothesizing the factional affinities of various elites.

Subsequent chapters are devoted to a chronological review of this process in action, from January 1972 through August 1974, the month in which President Nixon resigned. The resignation was of profound importance to the Chinese policy process, and its full impact cannot yet be confidently measured.

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## CHAPTER I - REFERENCES

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CHAPTER II

THE NIXON VISIT AND SALT: WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

During the course of 1972, Chinese commentary on the superpower relationship was primarily in reaction to events in military arenas -- particularly that of the strategic arms balance -- rather than to events in various territorial arenas. It is true that insistence upon the importance of territorial competition as an essential aspect of the superpower relationship figured importantly in one line of political argument during 1972, but Chinese comment on specific manifestations of the superpower relationship in specific regions of the world remained relatively sparse.

This chapter traces the course of Chinese statements on the superpower relationship through the first seven months of 1972, when the overriding external issue was the implications for China's strategic environment of the SALT I accords, and in a broader sense the importance of strategic nuclear forces in comparison with general-purpose forces. The primary internal issue during the same period was political struggle between those who, among other policies, advocated more rational dealings with the U.S. (epitomized by the Nixon visit) and more normal state-to-state contacts with other nations (represented by China's entry upon an active role in the United Nations).

The "contention-collusion" arguments were relevant both to external assessment and to internal struggle. In domestic politics, an attack on the advocates of dealings with the U.S. and state-to-state relations in the UN was conducted by adducing, as proof that they had badly misread the world situation, such apparent evidence of superpower solidarity as the SALT I accords. Superpower collusion was interpreted as meaning that no room for maneuver between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was available to China, and that all state-to-state dealings with other states would be poisoned by superpower influence.

The factions who were being attacked in this way clearly held the ascendancy in 1972, since their policies, the Nixon visit and the entry

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into the UN, had become realities. They chose to defend their position in three ways:

- (1) by denying that a U.S.-Soviet strategic arms agreement could be made to work;
- (2) by producing an analysis of the current state of the historical process which demonstrated that intensifying competition between the superpowers was the essential tendency and any apparent collusion between them only episodic;
- (3) by asserting that the territorial competition between the superpowers is a truer indicator of their relationship than the vicissitudes of the strategic arms balance.

Both the attack and the defense used analyses of the superpower relationship as means to domestic political ends that might be quite unrelated to superpower activities; at the same time, these analyses undoubtedly represented the authentic beliefs of some factions in the Chinese leadership. Those who were (and are) deeply concerned over superpower collusion as a threat to China would be the natural allies of those who wanted to turn out the faction that had the policy-making ascendancy for other reasons.

Of the various perceptions embodied in this debate, one particularly worthy of notice is the third defense against the collusionist argument. The implication of this line of reasoning is that there are some Chinese leaders who consider strategic nuclear weapons, for all their tremendous destructive power, as less important in determining the course of world events than the more traditional elements of power and influence: strong armies and navies, economic influence, influence over political factions in foreign countries, and the like. This view should be carefully distinguished from the People's War viewpoint, which rejects all such traditional tools of influence in favor of a radical empty-handedness, and while also rejecting the other extreme of the power spectrum, strategic nuclear weapon has at times a tendency to ally itself with strategic-weapons policies.

The outcome of the complex factional interplay of genuine perceptions and political expediency in the first seven months of 1972 was a gradual subsidence of collusionist rhetoric in favor of the contentionist line.

Strong public statements of the collusionist theme have occurred only twice since then: in November-December 1972, and during the period from August 1973 to the beginning of 1974.

B. COMING TO GRIPS WITH A NEW STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

January 1972 found the Chinese leadership engaged in sorting out the unsettling features of a remarkably transformed strategic situation and in restructuring a shattered macro-model. The preceding year had brought the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty and, in its wake, the Indo-Pakistani War -- the triumph of a Soviet ally over a Chinese ally and a major step in the increase of Russian influence in South Asia. September 1971 had seen the fall of Lin Biao, with its profound implications for Sino-Soviet and Sino-U.S. strategic relations. It was also in 1971 that Washington requested, Peking extended, and Washington accepted an invitation for President Nixon to visit the People's Republic in February 1972. Finally, and by no means least important, Washington and Moscow announced in 1971 that agreement had been reached on a SALT pact, scheduled for ratification in May 1972.

Chinese attitudes toward the superpower relationship had been in flux for some time. "Collusion" had once been every commentator's watchword. From 1965 until the end of 1968, the prevailing description characterized the U.S. and the Soviet Union as "colluding" to "contain" or "destroy" China. Beginning in late 1968, the phrase "contention and collusion" appeared with increasing frequency. Its appearance signalled the growing strength of the hitherto virtually mute contentionists, a faction which presumably saw enough daylight between the two superpowers to afford China the opportunity to maneuver between them, rather than facing them both across the same barricade. "Contention" and "collusion" are, in essence, mutually exclusive notions; and by the end of 1968 they had come to symbolize two irreconcilable factions in the Chinese leadership. From this time until late 1971, the two terms served as the "buzz words" in a public media debate over the nature of China's superpower-dominated strategic environment. Individual events of those years alternately strengthened or



weakened the advocates of each strategic analysis, making for a reasonably balanced contest. It was during this time that the number of participants in the debate grew, along with the number of subordinate domestic and international issues which came to attend this strategic debate.

During 1971, the "collusionists" (among whom one must place Lin Piao) lost ground. However, contrary to expectations, the 1972 New Year's message characterized the superpower relationship with the phrase "contention and collusion."<sup>1</sup> Given that the annual New Year's message reflects the most carefully phrased compromise at the highest level of the Chinese leadership, the implication of the 1972 message was that the "collusionists" were still strong enough to command representation in the policy process. "Collusion" of course, signalled opposition to China's opening to the U.S.; and the New Year's message confirmed that the decision reached in 1971 had not been consensual.

The "collusionists" had substantial evidence on their side in January 1972. The forthcoming signing of the initial SALT agreement undoubtedly outweighed the "tilt toward Pakistan" that had leaked from secret U.S. councils and the impending visit of President Nixon to China. SALT was profoundly disturbing to Chinese on all sides of the strategic debate, and a great deal of attention was focused upon the strategic arms arena.

#### C. DEBATING THE NIXON VISIT AND SALT I

It was not at all clear during the winter of 1971-72 that SALT would not emerge as a Soviet-American agreement directed against China. However, unlikely the prospect of such an anti-China SALT may have seemed to some members of the Peking leadership, the consequences of such an agreement would be so threatening that the slightest hint of such a development would be bound to weigh heavily in the strategic debate. Beyond this, there were certain groups among the collusionists that thrived on exaggerating this threat as a means for advancing their own suspicious or outright hostile views regarding U.S. motives toward China. Several military leaders fell

into this group, Huang Yung-sheng (Chief of Staff of the General Staff until his disappearance with Lin Piao in September 1971) being prominent among them. Shortly before his disappearance, he indicated his strong opposition to the forthcoming Nixon visit.<sup>2</sup> In fact, more than a year after the Nixon visit, the center was still compelled to force-feed the military (at least in Kunming) an education on the necessity of dealing with the Americans and on the distinction between such dealings and "Sino-American collusion."<sup>3</sup>

It was not in every case opposition to Sino-U.S. relations per se that motivated opposition to the Nixon visit. One might even have held relatively strong pro-U.S. views and still have thought the visit a bad idea. The Hong Kong press reported in early February 1972 that all but three Military Region commanders (the exceptions being the crucial ones of Peking and Shenyang, along with Nanking) had telegraphed the capital opposing the visit.<sup>4</sup> The reason stated for their opposition was that dealings of this sort might "lower the international prestige of China" -- implicitly, lower it in the same manner in which Czechoslovakia's had been lowered as a consequence of domestic developments in 1967 and early 1968. Whether this concern with "prestige" among Military Region commanders was ideological or pragmatic, and whether the press reports were genuine or fabricated, it is still safe to assume that most of the Chinese leadership had at least one eye on the Russian divisions along the northern border.

Attention remained focused upon the strategic arms arena for the few weeks before the Nixon visit. A Chinese nuclear test in January underscored Peking's determination to be a nuclear power (possible superpower collusion notwithstanding), to break the superpower monopoly on nuclear weapons, and presumably to respond in kind if attacked. Chou En-lai saw fit, however, to soften this position when addressing an American audience; he assured them that China's nuclear weapons were "still experimental."<sup>5</sup>

Though the New Year's message had specifically mentioned "nuclear deals" (i.e., SALT) as Soviet-U.S. collusion,<sup>6</sup> this theme was not raised again before or during the Nixon visit. In fact, a People's Daily "Commentator" article conveyed precisely the opposite impression. After referring

to the "frauds of the two superpowers in covering up their arms expansion and launching of aggression with the talks of disarmament", Commentator went on to denounce a bacterial weapons treaty proposal as the "product of Soviet-U.S. collusion".<sup>7</sup> True to Chinese style, Commentator was drawing attention to the absence of the word "collusion" in his earlier discussion of nuclear weapons.

An article appearing in Peking Review on January 28 described the superpowers as "contending and also colluding to monopolize international affairs and practice hegemony"; but the article omitted any reference to nuclear weapons. A new set of ground rules for the debate appear to have come into force at this time, according to which "collusion" would be used to describe the U.S.-Soviet relationship only in very general terms and without specific reference to geographical areas or issues -- i.e., the term would not be used in commenting on Soviet-U.S. behavior toward China. Further evidence of the existence of these new ground rules appears in the relatively large number of references, in January and early February, to collusion between either the U.S. or the Soviet Union and other nations.<sup>9</sup> It appears that the "collusionists" were being effectively subdued as the date of the Nixon visit neared. They were still able to parade their verbal flag, but only on neutral soil.

The Nixon visit had an obvious impact on the internal debate. For the next few months, only the "contentionists" were quoted in the Chinese press, but the volume of commentary on the superpower relationship dropped drastically. In late March, Li Hsien-nien spoke of superpower "contention for spheres of influence";<sup>10</sup> the term appeared twice again in anonymous Peking Review articles.<sup>11</sup> But verbiage, once so abundant, was now scarce; and comments on nuclear weapons disappeared entirely after Nixon left China. The Chinese leadership was waiting to see the SALT agreements in May, and the once vocal participants in the strategy debate were playing their cards very close during this period of intense internal battle over China's official policy toward SALT.

D. OFFICIAL REACTION TO SALT

Though begun before the accords were signed, the formulation of a Chinese position on SALT entailed the development of a new theoretical framework -- or model of superpower interaction -- before publishing the first official reaction to the signing. And, even after the first official reactions, an intense military debate raged on in secret, finally surfacing five month after Nixon left Moscow.

The first Chinese policy statement on nuclear weapons (after the signing) came in a speech by T'ang K'o at a plenary session of the UN Conference on Human Environment, on June 10, 1972.<sup>12</sup> T'ang did not refer specifically to SALT, but stated that the U.S. and USSR were "frenziedly developing their nuclear weapons and stepping up their arms race in their struggle for hegemony." He raised the theme (later to be given much attention) of nuclear bases in foreign countries, stated that China's nuclear weapons were still in the experimental stage, and asserted that the size of superpower stockpiles made a ban on nuclear testing unacceptable to those without large arsenals. There was little new in this statement, save perhaps the argument that the curbing of the arms race was insignificant. With the benefit of hindsight, it is now understood that T'ang's speech presented an interim, compromise policy position. It would take somewhat longer for a solid position to be formulated in Peking.

Additional statements in this vein were made at the UN conference, but a definitive comment on the May agreement was not to appear for more than a month. In the meantime, an important series of articles appeared, setting an historical - theoretical stage on which the positions of the "collusionists" and the "contentionists" might be adequately, if painfully, compromised.

These articles appeared in the April, May and June 1972 issues of Red Flag, under the name of Shih Chün (literally, history-military). The series began with a relatively innocuous call for the study of history, but the second and third articles dealt with more specific issues. Along with the Communist Manifesto and Mao's "New Democracy," the author took as his text Lenin's

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text Lenin's "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism." Using this, sounded the theme that while imperialism exists, a major factor in world history is (in Lenin's words) "the rivalry between several great powers in the striving for hegemony." Shih Chun comments that "The nature of imperialism determines that, while frequently colluding, the imperialist countries have no way of reconciling their conflicts in contending for world hegemony...Their collusion means greater oppression of the peoples, whereas their bitter rivalry provides favorable conditions for the revolutionary people. The revolutionary people must regard the contradictions among imperialists as an inevitable historical phenomenon as capitalism heads towards its doom, and concretely analyze and correctly handle them from a class standpoint."<sup>14</sup>

The second of these articles describes the "contention and collusion" between the U.S. and Japan in the Pacific before the Second World War, and the Soviet Union's relationship with Britain during the same period. The third describes the German-British struggle for naval supremacy that led to World War I, and then turns to a discussion of the Versailles-Washington system of the period between the great wars. Shih Chun declares that "Although imperialist countries colluded in dismembering the defeated countries, dividing weak and small nations and opposing the revolution of the people, their temporary compromise of one day only entailed fiercer struggle the next. The struggle between the imperialist countries is irreconcilable. The alliance between them is one between pirates who can never unite."<sup>15</sup>

The effect of these articles is to establish irreconcilable content as the essence of the superpower relationship. The possibility of collusion is admitted, but only as an episodic phenomenon. Those who see contention are, by definition, "right"; those who see collusion have no sense of history and are generalizing on the basis of a passing phenomenon.

In addition to compromising with the collusionists while simultaneously defining them into the odious realm of theoretical error, the Shih Chun articles introduce two important themes. The first, drawn from Lenin, is simply that imperialism leads to war. This theme, coupled with the assertion that the world is still in the imperialist stage, was destined to receive considerable attention in the next three years. The second was the

linking of "collusion" to the oppression of the people and "contention" to the favorable outcome of revolutionary struggles. In effect, the collusionists were defined into a pessimistic view of the "revolution"; and the contentionists, into an optimistic view. Once this theoretical justification of the contentionist position was established, Chou En-lai weighed in on the side of the contentionists. In a speech in late June welcoming Madame Bandaranaike to China, he declared: "The...superpowers are contending everywhere, from land to sea, from Europe to the Middle East and South Asia, and from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean."<sup>16</sup>

Chou's speech in June was but a prelude to a major policy statement, which he delivered on July 17 to a government delegation from the Yemen Arab Republic.<sup>17</sup> In this speech, Chou specifically denied that the May SALT agreements represented a step towards curbing the arms race, asserting that they were instead the beginning of a "new stage of the arms race." In addition, he denied by implication the unique importance of strategic nuclear weapons: "In order to contend for world hegemony, they are engaged in an arms race not only in nuclear armaments, but also in conventional armaments, each trying its utmost to gain superiority."

If the nuclear arms race was to be seen in the context of a more general arms race, the arms race as a whole was to be seen in the even broader context of contention for world hegemony -- the spatial contention that is at the heart of imperialism. With this message to convey, it was not by chance that Chou chose a third-world delegation as his audience:

"'Disarmament' is out of the question, let alone 'international peace and security,' in the circumstances when the superpowers continue to intensify their arms expansion and war preparations to set up military bases of all descriptions and to station armed forces in other countries and to direct nuclear blackmail and nuclear threats against the people of all countries."

Lest there should be any lingering notion that these activities were evidence of collusion rather than contention, Chou injected the theme of struggle for superiority, with its implications of struggle directed primarily at each other; he was edging toward characterization of the relationship as a zero-sum game, a characterization at which he was to arrive more explicitly a year later.

CHAPTER 11 - REFERENCES

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CHAPTER III

LATE 1972: ANOTHER STRATEGY DEBATE

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In the latter half of 1972, Chinese commentary on the superpower relationship continued to stress military trends more than territorial relationships. The beginnings of an increased attention to territorial matters as the year drew to a close are discussed in the next chapter; the present chapter is confined to the predominant military interest of Chinese commentary.

The salient events of late 1972 from our point of view are the emergence, in the pages of Red Flag for August and September, of a high-level debate on military policy -- a debate in which the exact issues are not clear to the outsider --, and the brief revival of the theme of superpower collusion by a wide variety of spokesmen, including two military men, in November. The prominence of military men in the restatement of the collusion theme is significant in the wake of a debate on military policy, but it would be a mistake to suggest that what occurred was an outright "revolt of the generals." Most of the most visible proponents of the collusionist theme in November 1972 were men with good contentionist credentials:

Yeh Chien-ying, Vice-Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, who on Army Day had identified himself with Chou En-lai's contentionist line;

Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Chinese representative at the UN, who in his earlier speeches had minimized the significance of SALT I, and whose carefully hedged statement of the collusion theme in November bespoke a reluctant obedience to orders;

Shih Chün, the journalist whose three articles in Red Flag for April-June had laid the theoretical foundations for the contentionist position.

The other military spokesman, whose factional affiliations were and are unclear, was Li Teh-sheng. His statement of the collusion formula,

however, was more carefully hedged about than any other, making it questionable whether he was a willing spokesman.

The pattern of the utterances suggests that following a vehement intra-party debate, certain contentionists agreed to make the concession to the collusionists of publicly stating the collusionist theme for a brief period. This expedient would preserve an appearance of party unity which would have been lost if collusionist spokesmen had appeared in a direct confrontation with contentionist spokesmen. In addition, it seems likely that most of the contentionists were persons of insufficient stature on the national scene and had insufficient media access to be able to state their own case. The upshot was that the pressure of intra-party debate was released in a limited explosion of collusionist rhetoric, managed and controlled by the contentionists.

B. LOSS OF BALANCE IN THE STRATEGIC ARENA

By July 1972, despite the optimistic case being built on evidence from other arenas, Chinese views of the strategic situation seems to have bordered on downheartedness. The Soviets were conducting a series of missile tests, and the Chinese appear at that point to have begun perceiving a strategic balance made up of quantity and quality on the Soviet side and quality alone on the American side, a balance inherently unstable and favoring the Soviets in the long run. Commentary which emerged at this time returned frequently to the theme that China ought not to be psychologically overwhelmed by the immensity of the strategic arsenals facing her, but should arrive at a just appraisal of her own military potential, even while not underestimating that of possible adversaries.

The old, familiar "nuclear weapons are paper tigers" theme was reintroduced by Shih Chün in his article in Red Flag for June<sup>2</sup>, and in the July issue an article by Hung Yüan expanded on the theme.<sup>3</sup> The latter article, entitled "Grasp the General Trend of Historical Development -- Notes on Studying 'On the Chungking Negotiations,'" touched on the early alliance with the Kuomintang and described the discouragement in the communist ranks which followed the Shanghai Massacre in 1927. The article

even alluded to another article which, in recent years, has been the sovereign tonic for despair: "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire." The article cautions against overestimating one's own subjective strength and against overestimating the physical strength of the enemy, then goes on to declare that the enemy "seems powerful at a certain time, but actually. . . (is) not."

Yeh Chien-ying, Vice Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, commented on the strategic arena when he delivered the Army Day address on August 1.<sup>4</sup> For the most part, he echoed Chou En-lai's new line, emphasizing contention as the unchangeable nature of imperialism and social imperialism. Interestingly, he described both superpowers as struggling for nuclear supremacy, conceding supremacy to neither.

Later in August, the Chinese took advantage of the U.N. Seabed Conference to expand their discussion of the nuclear arena to include superpower nuclear bases abroad, superpower aircraft, warships, and nuclear-armed submarines.<sup>5</sup> In September, however, this near exclusive concern with the strategic weapons arena would end. It was in September that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact conducted major exercises, and the Chinese press took up the theme of Europe, which heretofore had received virtually no attention.<sup>6</sup> In October, Ch'iao Kuan-hua enveloped all the new themes in his U.N. address and, in particular, reminded Europe that the Soviet Union had attacked an ally in 1968.<sup>7</sup>

#### C. THE STRATEGY DEBATE

Since the Nixon visit, events of major importance to China's East Asian position had taken place. In Japan, Premier Sato had left office and had been succeeded by Kakuei Tanaka, who lost no time in arranging a visit to China. Sato's fall had been occasioned by the Nixon shock, administered to Japan's international self-respect and to her diplomatic position, and the dollar shock, administered to her pride and her economy. Sato's last major achievement had been the reversion to Japanese control of Okinawa,

once the "keystone" of U.S. Asian encirclement. This territorial consideration, coupled with Japan's new economic problems, her partial estrangement from the U.S. and her change of government, offered a clear opportunity for China to contract closer ties with Japan.

The changed power balance in Northeast Asia area was tested by a North Korean initiative aimed at reunification of the peninsula, which produced a tentative South Korean response and a more friendly and laudatory stage in Sino-Korean relations: the Koreans began to quote and praise Mao's thought, and the Chinese gave more favorable attention to Kim Il-Sung.

In Vietnam the last U.S. ground forces departed in August, following the North Vietnamese offensive and the mining of Haiphong Harbour. A snag in the peace negotiations led President Nixon, who had been reelected in November, to order the heavy bombing of North Vietnam in December. The peace treaty was finally signed in January 1973.

The Chinese obviously took seriously the U.S. representations in the Shanghai communique, for they moved large numbers of their troops from Fukien, opposite Taiwan, to the Northern military regions. Three more Soviet divisions were added to the forty-six already on the border, and the number of Soviet tactical nuclear weapons storage areas was increased from fourteen to nineteen.<sup>8</sup> By October, the Chinese were sufficiently close to deploying their first 3500 NM ICBM to occasion a U.S. announcement that deployment had in fact occurred<sup>9</sup>-- a statement which seems to have been premature, judging by Secretary Schlesinger's more recent statements.<sup>10</sup> There were reports of a border clash on the Kazakhstan border in November; the details were sketchy, neither foreign ministry wished to commit itself to comment, and the importance of the incident is difficult to weigh.<sup>11</sup> There were predictions in the U.S. press of Soviet military exercises in the Far East, to last perhaps as long as three months, but these exercises seem not to have materialized.<sup>12</sup> Sino-Soviet border negotiations had been resumed March 20th, but little headway was being made.

Against the background of these events a major strategic debate took place in Peking, surfacing early in August. The first evidence of the debate was the appearance in Red Flag for August (which came out on

Army Day) of an article by Chin Ts'an, "Notes on Studying 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War,'" <sup>13</sup> which was countered by an article by Shen Chun, "The Victory of Chairman Mao's Concept of Strategy," <sup>14</sup> in the September issue. Both articles took the form of notes on writings of Chairman Mao. The former was an attack on "left opportunists" and the latter an attack on "right opportunists."

The two articles did not define a "correct" middle ground between them, but advocated mutually exclusive positions. Their central point of disagreement was over the question of whether the military situation was still that of the strategic defensive, or the time was ripe for going over to the strategic offensive. The gravity of the dispute was underlined in the introduction to the article on "Problems of Strategy," where the writer pointed out that the Mao article (written in 1936 on the eve of the war with Japan) was "the result of a major innerparty controversy on military questions," <sup>15</sup>

The article stressed the necessity of studying "the specific laws of revolutionary war, and the even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China," and of making a concrete analysis of the "political, economic, military and geographical factors" on the enemy's side and one's own. The principal characteristics of China's revolutionary war (as pointed out by Mao) were that China was "unevenly developed politically and militarily" and had "gone through the great revolution of 1925-1927"; that it had a "big and powerful enemy" and a "small and weak Red Army" and that it possessed the "leadership of the communist party and the agrarian revolution." These characteristics "determined that it was possible for the Red Army to grow and defeat its enemy, but at the same time it was not possible for it to grow very rapidly and defeat its enemy quickly; in other words, the war would be protracted and might even be lost if mishandled." Mao's conclusion from these characteristics was to "oppose the idealist and mechanical approach to the problem of war and work out the guiding line of active defense, luring in deep, concentration of troops, mobile warfare and war of annihilation." This policy was necessary because "a military man cannot overstep the limitations imposed by the material conditions." <sup>16</sup>

The parallel with the situation of 1972 is immediately apparent. In 1972 China was again "unevenly developed politically and militarily" in the aftermath of the Great Cultural Revolution of 1965-1969; it had a "big and powerful enemy," the Soviet Union, and the ruling party had opted for the primary of agricultural development (the "agrarian revolution") over industrial development. Consequently, while the PLA could be expected to be a match for the Soviet Red Army at some time in the future, the time for a confrontation with the Soviets had not yet arrived. Material conditions (i.e. the objective situation) imposed severe limitations; disaster might follow upon premature action.

After a summary of the classical pattern for "People's War", the article turns to an exposition of the fallacies of the "left opportunists" under Wang Ming. These "fallacies" included demands for positional warfare, "regular" warfare, "strategy of quick decision and protracted campaigns by purely relying on the main force of the Red Army"; a desire to "attack on all fronts" and "strike with two fists" "in two directions at the same time"; use of "fixed battlelines and absolutely centralized command" -- in other words, the professional military approach to the problems facing the Red Army. During Chiang's Fifth Encirclement Campaign, "left opportunists" are said to have shifted their policy twice: "they at first resorted to adventurism in offensive, proposing to engage the enemy outside the gates"; and then to conservatism in defensive, advocating the dividing up of the forces for defense and engaging in a "contest of attrition" against the enemy; "in the end they fell into flightism." This policy is said to have led to defeat and to the necessity for the Long March.<sup>17</sup>

The advantages of active defense are (1) that one fights "on just grounds," demonstrating to the world that one is the attacked, not the attacker, and (2) that one fights on favorable terrain in a planned way. The author cautions, using the words of Mao, that "we do not reject positional warfare where it is possible and necessary." He explains that "out of the needs of strategic defense or strategic counterattack, it should be admitted that positional warfare should be employed for the tenacious defense of certain strategic points and important positions and also in

attacking certain fortified enemy positions and strongholds." The historical lesson concludes with the observation that Wang Ming's "left opportunist line" was terminated at the Tsunyi Conference, where Chairman Mao's correct line prevailed. It is the correct line that reflects the objective laws of China's revolutionary war, while left and right opportunist lines are products of "idealism and metaphysics" and cannot but meet with defeat in practice.<sup>18</sup>

In summary, Mao's conception of People's War is reaffirmed, for the near term at least; but assurance is given that certain vital points - Peking, and probably the Southern Manchurian industrial area - will be defended tenaciously in the event of a Soviet invasion. It is unlikely that many Chinese leaders, whether military or civilian, found the prospect of abandoning China's political and industrial centers palatable.

It is worth considering whether the article is indeed intended to apply only to the Chinese situation.

Reading it as a caution to the North Vietnamese (or to the North Koreans or both groups) seems possible, especially in view of the North Vietnamese conventional-style offensive that had been carried out earlier in the year, with limited success and considerable losses. Yet there are a good many elements in the article that seem to have relevance only to the Chinese situation. First, there is the stress on the unique nature of China's revolutionary war. Again, the mention of Wang Ming's line and of Chairman Mao's theory of the two-line struggle is significantly suggestive of the most recent political struggle in China, and it is tempting to consider Tsunyi in 1935 as a symbol of the (poorly understood) Lushan Conference of 1970. The strategic aberrations of the Fifth Encirclement Campaign period would then symbolize the border clash of 1969 and the subsequent fear of Soviet attack. In either case, it appears that a militant, attack-minded faction, probably within the military, needed restraining.

The other article, published a month later, takes as its historical text Mao's decision, in July 1948, to open a strategic offensive against the Nationalist troops in the Northeast, and specifically to bypass enemy



garrisons at Ch'angch'un and Shenyang and strike directly at Chinchow. Considering the overall situation, Mao saw that, although the Red Army was at a disadvantage numerically and in equipment, it had been "tempered in the war and had gone through the new type of ideological education" and hence had better morale and combat power. This fact, coupled with the fact of land reform and party consolidation in the liberated areas, meant that conditions were favorable but that victory still had to be won through a decisive battle at the decisive moment. The decision to concentrate forces for a drive on Chinchow allowed the other isolated Nationalist garrisons to be surrounded and reduced in succession. During the campaign a "rightist swindler" (later specifically identified as Lin Piao) tried to pull back the troops and change the strategy, but Chairman Mao's principle prevailed over this right opportunist line.<sup>19</sup>

The fundamental mistake of the right opportunists, according to this article, was to overestimate the enemy and underestimate the strength of the people; they failed to see that the time was ripe for a strategic decisive battle and that the complete overthrow of the Nationalists in a short time was possible. "They saw only the superficial phenomena of things instead of their essence and main aspects and the trend of their development. They saw only the part, and not the whole war; and they saw only the existing difficulties, and not the important role of men's subjective initiative in promoting the development of the war situation."<sup>20</sup>

Clearly Shen Chun's article takes issue with the cautious stand advocated by Chin Ts'an a month earlier: the "subjective initiative" of the Chinese, their revolutionary impetus and determination, will make up for deficiencies in merely material aspects. Other articles published the same time also stressed the importance of taking "subjective initiative" into account in planning, and of not underestimating China's revolutionary potential.

The conclusion is inescapable that this article advocates a more aggressive policy of confrontation with, or even attack on, the Soviet Union. The attack-minded faction is being allowed to have its say. However, the fact that Chin Ts'an's more cautious article was published on

Army Day indicates that it was the more cautious faction that had prevailed in the military debate. This supposition receives further support from the fact that the Chinese were careful to send greetings to the Soviet Union on the anniversary of the October Revolution, thus disavowing any desire for an early confrontation. Still, a heated debate had clearly taken place during the summer of 1972; is it possible that under the influence of apparent rapprochement with the U.S., the Chinese leadership contemplated the possibility of a quick military showdown with the Soviet Union? Did some expected benefit from the U.S. fail to materialize, causing the Chinese leadership to adopt a more negative attitude toward the U.S. at the end of the year?

D. RESURGENCE OF THE COLLUSIONIST CASE

The collusionist case made a brief but striking reappearance in November; it was first restated by two military leaders, Yeh Chien-ying and Li Teh-sheng. Yeh, who on Army Day 1972 had made a speech following Chou's contentionist line (first stated on 21 July), parted company with Chou by stating to an Albanian military delegation that "the world is far from peaceful because Soviet revisionist socialist imperialism and U.S. imperialism are contending and colluding with each other."<sup>21</sup>

Five days later, Li Teh-sheng, Director of the PLA General Political Department, made a more detailed statement to the Albanian delegation. After explicitly describing the Soviet Union as the more dangerous to the world of the two superpowers, Li rang the whole series of changes on the contention and collusion theme: "the superpowers both contend and collude with each other. They contend increasingly; their temporary compromise is only a prelude to even bigger contention. Their contention extends from the land to the seas and from the earth to outer space. Wherever this contention takes place, there the sovereignty of countries is violated. Wherever they collude with each other, there the people are suppressed."<sup>22</sup>

Each of these themes had already been sounded in 1972, but Li's last statement was significantly different from the earlier formulation of Shi Chün: a new standard was now provided for distinguishing contention from collusion. Violation of sovereignty means contention; suppression of the people means collusion. Suppression of wars of national liberation is the area in which collusion is operative, whereas international power politics is not collusion but contention. The formulation appears to justify state-to-state diplomacy as an outgrowth of the contentionist analysis, and people-to-people dealings (support for revolutionary movements) as an outgrowth of the collusionist analysis. But the very fact that Li participates in the resurrection of the collusionist analysis, after its disappearance for six months, is striking.

More striking by far is the speech delivered in the United Nations General Assembly two days later by Ch'iao Kuan-hua: "the plain truth is that it (the Soviet Union) has recently reached an agreement with the United States on the limitation of strategic arms, so that it is reviving the old Khrushchevite dream of Soviet-U.S. collaboration for world domination, that is, Soviet-U.S. collaboration to maintain nuclear monopoly and nuclear superiority and to carry out nuclear blackmail and nuclear threat against people of the world. Actually this is trying to keep the world under Soviet-U.S. control in the name of maintaining world peace. To use Khrushchev's words, 'If any madman wanted war, we (the Soviet Union and the United States) would but have to shake our fingers to warn him off.'"<sup>23</sup>

Here Ch'iao specifically relates the SALT agreements to Soviet-U.S. collaboration against others, yet he avoids using the charged word "collusion." Moreover, the statement is carefully phrased to accuse only the Soviets of aspiring to world domination through the SALT agreements; although the U.S. may be "collaborating" with the Soviet Union, it is not necessarily with the aim of establishing U.S. hegemony over the world. The Soviets are exploiting "collaboration" as a means to their own aims. It

appears that Ch'iao is reluctant to charge the U.S. with failure to live up to the anti-collusion and anti-hegemony statements in the Shanghai Communique. The whole tenor of his speech suggests an attempt to comply with the letter, but not the spirit, of directives from home.

At about the same time, Shih Chun contributed to Red Flag a sequel to his earlier articles on the lessons of history. But, while the earlier articles had laid the basis for the contentionists' case, the author now mentioned "collusion": "colluding as well as contending with U.S. imperialism, the Soviet revisionists are dreaming of establishing a great colonial empire stretching from Europe, Asia and Africa to Latin America ... The U.S. paper tiger has fallen; the Soviet Union is bearing its fangs and looks overbearing: actually it too is beset ..."<sup>24</sup>

This formulation goes a step further in the direction hinted at in Ch'iao Kuan-hua's speech: collusion with the Soviets may be harmful to U.S. interests. Collusion is no longer a matter of a gentlemen's agreement between the two nations to divide up the world, because the Soviet Union is colluding its way into America's backyard; one of the colluders is swallowing up the other.

Although the contentionists had held the upper hand in the debate during the first half of 1972, by mid-autumn their hand had weakened; viewing the period in retrospect, it is easy to see why. Two phenomena were working against the contentionists. First, U.S.-USSR "detente" was being so carefully nurtured in Moscow and Washington that there was little evidence of contention in any arena, and the August ratification of the SALT ABM treaty was just icing on the collusionists' cake. The contentionist strategy of focusing on several arenas, in order to dilute the significance of SALT, could not be pursued in the absence of activity in those arenas. Reluctantly, the contentionists joined the collusionists in watching the strategic arms arena.

Second, the position of those expecting little progress from the U.S. on the Shanghai Communique agreements was being vindicated. The reversion of Okinawa could hardly have been regarded as a gesture to Peking: in fact,

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an argument could be made that the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, in the absence of substantial "progress" on the Taiwan issue, was an affront to Peking.

CHAPTER III - REFERENCES

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CHAPTER IV

1973: BEHIND-THE-SCENES MANEUVERING AND A  
NEW GEOPOLITICAL PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

During the first half of 1972, a case was carefully built for the argument that interaction in the military arenas was not the crucial issue in assessing the superpowers. Instead, the vital interests of the superpowers -- and, therefore, the best evidence of the essence of the relationship -- were said to lie in the competition for territory. It was in the geopolitical arenas that they were seen to contend most bitterly, and the logical extension of this argument was that the Soviet Union was becoming so engrossed in efforts to compete with the U.S. for control of Europe and the Middle East that Moscow would have little attention to devote to military action against China.

By the beginning of 1973, the contentionists were ready to devote more energy to pointing out specific areas of superpower contention in order to buttress the case for their policies. This chapter follows the course of their arguments on the three territorial arenas to which they devoted the most attention: Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East. Two other areas which also received increased attention, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, are not discussed in detail here; the Mediterranean was generally treated by the Chinese as an adjunct to the European and Middle Eastern arenas, and the Indian Ocean naval buildup, when not treated simply as an example of an imperialist arms race, received its most significant discussion in the secret Kunming Documents, discussed in Chapter V, rather than in Chinese public utterances.

It is important to note that the "geopolitical propaganda offensive" served two purposes. In addition to providing indirect corroboration of the contentionist case during a period when the political maneuvering leading up to the Tenth Party Congress made more direct argument of the issues in the public press infeasible, the campaign also signified an acceleration



in China's attempt to gain leadership of the Third World -- through the state-to-state medium of the UN -- and represented the beginning of the Chinese "Second-World Strategy" of increasing cooperation with Europe. These external functions of stepped-up attention to the specifics of geopolitics are clearly closer to the contentionist than to the collusionist approach.

B. SLACKENING OF DEBATE ON THE SUPERPOWER RELATIONSHIP

By the beginning of 1973 the upsurge of the collusionists that had occurred in November 1972 had faded out: the term "collusion" had become taboo in all contexts. There was no further public airing of the strategic debate that had surfaced in the November 1972 Red Flag, but the leadership was clearly in a state of considerable uncertainty over assessment of the superpower relationship. The 1973 New Year's Message was noticeably reticent on the subject; it denounced the "hegemonism and power politics of the two superpowers," but made no mention of any specific arenas. Mention of "contention" as well as "collusion" was omitted, the message going only so far as to note that the superpowers continued to "scheme and plot."<sup>1</sup>

There is little doubt that uncertainty about the immediate intentions of the Soviet Union was a major factor in Peking's reticence. The military realities of late 1972 had not changed, and there was still every reason to believe that the Soviets would initiate new political maneuvers in reaction to the improvement of Sino-American and Sino-Japanese relations. A hint of the kinds of apprehensions that were felt can be found in Fu Tso-yi's admission to the Taiwanese at the beginning of March. After noting that the Shanghai Communique showed a change in the attitude of the United States, he stated,

"It should also be pointed out that if there are people who, though they see clearly that the United States cannot be relied upon, dream of relying on someone else, it is not only absurd but absolutely impossible. . . . The people in Taiwan, especially those who went there from the Mainland, absolutely will not permit anyone to serve another master; the entire Chinese people under the leadership of Chairman Mao will never permit anyone to engage in such treacherous activities again."<sup>2</sup>

The reference was clearly to the Soviet Union, although Peking could hardly have been averse to having the Japanese take a warning from it as well.

There is little other indication in the media of what trend discussions in the Chinese leadership were taking in early 1973. It is not likely that the military - strategic situation alone had brought about the impasse. More likely, preparations were underway either for the Tenth Party Congress (which, in fact, convened in August 1973) or, as some no doubt hoped, for a third plenum of the Ninth Party Congress. These preparations naturally entailed extensive behind-the-scenes "vote trading" and the formation and dissolution of factional alliances. It is not surprising that all this was accompanied by a lowering of voices in the public discussion of strategic questions, for media offensives dealing with sensitive issues generally follow decisions by the leadership and conform to guidelines developed at the time of the decision rather than representing a campaign to influence a forthcoming decision. The constituency that is relevant to policy making is not that which is persuaded by the press.

The temporary slackening of official comment on strategic issues was balanced by an intensified and broadened propaganda campaign against other activities of the superpowers, particularly the Soviet Union, in several regions of the world. The new campaign, which was designed to further the Third-World strategy (which Peking carried on especially in the United Nations) and the 'Second-World' strategy of closer ties with Europe and Japan (which had begun in the previous year) had apparently been authorized by the leadership in late 1972. The contradiction between the superpowers and the Third World--the fundamental axiom of the Third-World strategy--was the only theme involving superpowers to be sounded in the New Year's Message, and the message was followed in short order by a succession of articles on superpower activities against the Third World.

One manifestation of the debate that was in process in the first half of 1973 was the so-called "Education on Situation" campaign, aimed at educating the Chinese public on the international situation and the correctness of the leadership's policies dealing with it. A collection of materials from this campaign, the "Kunming Documents," reveal a great deal about

the nature of factional disagreements on foreign policy. They will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The culmination of political maneuvering and policy debate was the Tenth Party Congress, held August 24-28, 1973. Chou En-lai's report to the Congress embodied compromises on the points at issue among the competing factions and set the tone for a renewal of commentary on U.S.-Soviet competition and its impact on Chinese security. But the October 1973 Middle East War profoundly influenced perceptions of the international situation, and Chinese assessment of the superpowers would be radically altered. Shifts in the factional balance occurring between the Tenth Party Congress and Chinese reaction to the first stage of the October War are the subject of Chapter VI.

#### C. THE GEOPOLITICAL PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE

In 1972, the Chinese had sounded the theme of superpower competition for hegemony in the world, but for the most part the references were general, with only occasional attention to particular areas of contention. References to the individual activities of the superpowers in various areas, such as American involvement in Southeast Asia and Soviet involvement in South Asia, were more common. Third World resistance to superpower contention and events in the Middle East received a relatively large amount of attention, as did the seas in general and the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean in particular. Chinese representatives to the UN Sea Bed Conference in August 1972 returned frequently to the theme of U.S.-Soviet naval rivalry and "economic exploitation and plunder" on the seas.<sup>3</sup>

Also in 1972, individual members of the leadership began to devote more attention to analyzing the overall pattern of superpower competition in the world. As noted earlier, on June 30, 1972 Chou had introduced the idea that the superpowers were "contending everywhere, from the land to the sea, from Europe to the Middle East and South Asia, and from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean".<sup>4</sup> The contentionists were denying the significance of

the May SALT accords as evidence of superpower collusion, and at the same time were stressing the idea that territorial competition was a much more fundamental part of the relationship.

The series of Soviet-U.S. agreements on trade, science and technology, culture, and health which were concluded through the summer of 1972 must have appeared to many members of the Chinese leadership as still stronger evidence of Soviet-American collusion. In this context, it is significant that the October 1 National Day editorial again stressed the theme of superpower contention in the Middle East and South Asia and for the first time identified Europe as the "main point" of Soviet contention with the United States.<sup>5</sup> Even more significant was Ch'iao Kuan-hua's speech in the UN on October 3rd, about the time of the signing of the final Soviet-US Trade Treaty, in which he stated that the United States and the Soviet Union could not control their arms race even if they wanted to, minimized the importance of the cooperation agreements in the other fields, and devoted considerable time to the theme of U.S.-Soviet military and political competition in four areas: the Middle East, Europe, South Asia and the Mediterranean.<sup>6</sup>

Analyses of worldwide patterns of U.S.-Soviet competition seem in 1972 to have been used mainly in the service of the contentionist argument. It was not until early 1973, when collusion was no longer being explicitly discussed, that there emerged a trend toward greater attention to individual arenas of U.S.-Soviet competition. In particular, previously infrequent coverage of the Latin American and European regions gained prominence. Middle East coverage had already been considerable, but it increased even further, as did coverage of the Mediterranean (linked to both the Middle East and Europe) and the Indian Ocean. In addition, news items (usually without commentary) that dealt with various types of American and, particularly, Soviet geopolitical maneuvering in other areas increased in frequency.

In 1972 the Chinese had discussed Latin America only when questions specifically involving it arose at the UN: e.g., the question of the 200-mile nautical limit, discussed in May, and the proposal for a Latin-American nuclear-free zone, discussed in November. In January 1973 an article in Peking Review referred to Soviet aims to "infiltrate and expand in Latin America by taking advantage of United States imperialism's

shaky position there"; it adduced rather weak evidence: general Soviet proposals on the territorial seas, free passage, and fisheries.<sup>7</sup> More specific citations of Soviet activities followed in the course of the year. By 19 March, Huang Hua was inveighing at the UN Sea Bed Conference against not only the "piratic fishing vessels" of the two superpowers and their position on the 200-mile limit, but also the presence of superpower bases and nuclear-armed ships in the area, the superpower refusal to eschew the use of nuclear weapons in the nuclear-free zone, and "international economic cooperation" (a Soviet program). The latter program was described as "a means to retaliate and exert political and economic pressure upon those Latin American countries which firmly oppose superpower economic oppression."<sup>8</sup>

The tempo of the rhetoric and the specificity of the examples gradual increased through 1973, and by the beginning of 1974 the Chinese were stressing the theme of growing Latin American realization that there exists not one but two imperialisms. By the Spring of 1974, a major article in Red Flag, "Stepped-up Soviet-U.S. Competition in the Western Hemisphere," alluded to a definite trend toward military confrontation in Latin America.<sup>9</sup>

The sudden increase of interest in Latin America at the beginning of 1973 and the steady intensification of reference to the theme through 1973 and 1974 is not explained by any direct Chinese security interest in Latin America. Latin America is, both in space and in opportunity for interaction, one of the remotest parts of China's world. Chinese interest in Latin America probably intensified precisely because the Chinese had no foothold in Latin America. They certainly desired to discredit the Soviets, who were gaining a foothold in Latin America and had control over the Latin American Communist Parties, and to establish their own ties with Latin American communism. At the beginning of 1973, Soviet influence was visibly increasing in Peru and Chile, and the exercise of Soviet discipline over the Latin American Communist parties was of a strength which continued through 1975 when a congress of Latin American parties, at Soviet behest, voted to condemn the Chinese course in world affairs.

The Chinese may have wished too to convey to the United States the idea that the Soviet Union was usurping US influence in Latin America. If messages to the United States in the Chinese press could have any effect in intensifying the American contention with the Soviets, this would benefit the Chinese by further assuring that the Soviets would be too preoccupied with their superpower competition to be able to turn their attention to China.

If the increase in propaganda about Latin America is only marginally relevant to any Chinese security interests, the increase in Chinese attention to Europe is another matter. Europe is important in China's security calculations as a "second front," to which Soviet military planners must direct their attention and to which large numbers of Soviet general-purpose forces must be committed. It is also, in the Chinese phrase, "the focus of United States competition with Soviet Union," and, as such, is of major importance in assessing the degree of contention or collusion between the two superpowers. The beginning of the CESC talks in July 1973 and of the MBFR talks in October of the same year were unsettling to Chinese security calculations, since they raised the possibility of arms reductions in Europe that would free more Soviet weaponry for deployment along the border with China and confer greater freedom of action on the Soviet leadership in their dealings with the Chinese. To many, these talks must have seemed to be further evidence of superpower collusion; the assertion that Europe was the "focus of U.S.-Soviet contention" must have been formulated by the contentionists to counter such suspicions.

In terms of the Maoist anti-superpower analysis, Europe represents, along with Japan, the "Second World": developed nations that are squeezed in the superpower competition. In more orthodox communist analytical terms, however, Europe represents capitalism and imperialism, the mortal enemies of communism and the proletariat. Accordingly, a concern for European security, and even more the improvement of relations with Europe, means the ascendancy of both pragmatic politics and the anti-superpower analysis over the more orthodox communist view of Europe.

The new Chinese interest in Europe found almost no expression in Chinese statements at the UN. At the beginning, it was confined to a change in the

reporting of news items in the Chinese press; these items were few, but significant. In February 1973, there were reports of NATO land and sea maneuvers (designed to repel an "aggressor from the East")<sup>10</sup>, a summary of an article in a British paper on Soviet expansionist aims in Europe,<sup>11</sup> and neutral coverage of a U.S.-British summit meeting at which problems of the defense of Europe were discussed.<sup>12</sup>

In mid-April, an article by a New China News Agency commentator on the U.S.-Soviet naval rivalry in the Mediterranean linked Soviet naval activity there to a plan for a pincer movement around Europe--the most specific discussion of Soviet European strategy up to that time.<sup>13</sup> In July, as the Conference on European Security and Cooperation convened, the comments of western European foreign ministers on the Soviet danger to Europe were reported.<sup>14</sup> In August, the talks between U.S. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger and British Defense Minister Lord Carrington on the defense of Europe were reported, with only the barest suggestion of American designs on Europe.<sup>15</sup> In the same month, the fifth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was noted, along with its implications for the security of allies of the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup>

By September, after the Tenth Party Congress had concluded, Chou En-la was able to welcome French President Pompidou to China and to stress the importance of European unity in the face of superpower contention for Europe.<sup>17</sup> A People's Daily editorial of September 11 followed Chou's lead, calling for Western European unity, but stressed the importance of national independence over all, with the middle-sized and small European countries "united in various forms and within different scopes". The editorial sounded again the warning that "the superpowers are constantly reinforcing their military strength in Europe and the Mediterranean and stepping up their struggle for hegemony. . ."<sup>18</sup>

Chinese references to Europe have continued in this vein, ridiculing the MBFR and CESC negotiations as sham detente and as a Soviet plot to divide Europe.<sup>19</sup> It was a natural outgrowth of the new Chinese interest in Europe that state-to-state contacts should broaden, beginning with the Pompidou visit and Chi P'eng-fei's brief European tour,<sup>20</sup> continuing through

a series of visits of European dignitaries to China in 1973-74, and climaxing, for the present at least, with Teng Hsiao-p'ing's dramatic visit to France in April 1975. Clearly the "Second-World Strategy," formulated in late 1972 and set in motion in 1973, is still on track.

The Middle East occupies a special position in Chinese calculations. Although the Chinese have very little influence and few direct interests there, the height of Arab nationalist and anti-imperialist passions makes the Middle East figure importantly in the propaganda of the Third-World strategy. In addition, the intersection of critical U.S. and Soviet economic interests there makes the Middle East an arena in which any discrediting of the superpowers would have a major impact. China accordingly supports efforts to discredit the superpowers, especially the Soviet Union, in the Middle East arena. Beyond the importance in the Third-World strategy, however, the Middle East serves the Chinese as an important barometer of superpower intentions. The size of superpower interests in the area and the constant instability and unpredictability of the situation offer a continuing test of what the United States and the Soviet Union will do when the chips are down and they must react quickly.

The most significant fact about Chinese commentary on the Middle East in 1973, prior to the October war, was not its increase in volume over 1972, but the fact that the Chinese picked up the majority of their propaganda themes from the Arab press. Because of the potential that Middle East conflict holds for enhancing China's reputation in the Third-World, the Chinese wish to be sure that their own propaganda utterances are aligned as closely as possible with the strongly held convictions of the Arabs. The theme that the Soviet Union was in fact aiding Israel had been sounded in 1972, along with the complaint that the Soviets placed restrictions upon the use of arms which they sold to Arab countries. In 1973, the Chinese began to claim that, in allowing the immigration of Jews to Israel, the Soviets were in fact supplying Israel with manpower to carry the guns furnished by the United States.<sup>21</sup> On one occasion this theme was elaborated by mention that the manpower emigrating to Israel from the Soviet Union included experts in many scientific disciplines including nuclear physics--implying indirect Soviet support for Israeli weapons programs.<sup>22</sup> When in



mid-1973 the Soviet Union agreed to abolish the immigration tax levied on Jewish immigrants in return for most favored nation status in trade with the United States, the Chinese were quick to proclaim a "new dirty deal" between the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>23</sup> On this occasion, Jewish immigration was described by the Chinese as a "chip in [the Soviets' behind-the-scenes bargaining with U.S. imperialism," but thereafter the continued flow of Jewish refugees to Israel was depicted as Soviet support for Israel. In September 1973, when the line of the Tenth Party Congress had made the discussion of superpower collusion temporarily respectable again, the Chinese press quoted articles in a number of Egyptian papers describing supposed Soviet-U.S. conspiracy in the Middle East at the time of the 1967 war.<sup>24</sup>

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15. Peking Review #32, 10 August 1973, p. 20.
16. Peking Review #34, 24 August 1973.
17. FBIS, 12 September 1973, pp. A3-A4.
18. FBIS, 11 September 1973, pp. A2-A3.
- 19.

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20. Chi visited Britain and France between June 7 and 14, afterward visiting Iran and Pakistan. Brezhnev visited the U.S. the following week.
21. Peking Review #2, 12 January 1973, pp. 5-7; #11, 16 March 1973, p. 19.
22. Peking Review #34, 24 August 1974, p. 20.
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CHAPTER V  
INTERNAL DEBATE: THE KUNMING DOCUMENTS  
AND THE TENTH PARTY CONGRESS

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Our evidence for the nature of the political maneuvering that went on behind the scenes in preparation for the Tenth Party Congress, while the geopolitical propaganda offensive was being conducted publicly, comes from two sources: the so-called "Kunming Documents," which were used in propagandizing the PLA, and the decisions unveiled at the Party Congress itself and in the press following its conclusion.

The Kunming Documents bear out the supposition that dissatisfaction among PLA commanders in various parts of China was an important factor in the strategy debate of late 1972 which led to the sanctioning of a brief resurgence of collusionist rhetoric toward the end of the year. The central military and party authorities -- or at least the contentionists among them -- clearly found it necessary to try to allay PLA disapproval of policies perceived as pro-U.S. and anti-Soviet as a prerequisite for the successful convening of a Party Congress -- particularly since the aim was to produce a new Central Committee rather than simply to reconvene the members of the Ninth Central Committee (elected in 1969 during Lin Piao's ascendancy) for a Third Plenum.

The Kunming Military Region was one that had followed the progress of U.S. air strikes throughout the Vietnam War and had undoubtedly experienced considerable worry over whether they might eventually reach over the border into China; accordingly the PLA commanders there (and in Yunnan, where the document was reprinted) might be expected to be among the most anti-American to be found in the Army. An important question is whether strong anti-Americanism was a sufficient impetus for anyone to declare himself a collusionist. It appears from the Documents that many military men, if not actually friendly towards the Soviets, were still not inclined to

distrust them too far. If, in order to give one's anti-Americanism effective expression in the Chinese political milieu, one had to pay the price of donning the compulsory cloak of anti-Sovietism, we may assume that the collusionist ranks included many anti-American, but not especially anti-Soviet, military men.

Chou En-lai's report to the Tenth Party Congress indicated that the efforts of early 1973 aimed at quieting the collusionists had not met with total success: he himself had to pay lip service to the theme of "collusion," as he had previously avoided doing. Nonetheless, as is shown below, he made his report an effective counterattack on the collusionist argument, particularly through analysis of events in the European arena.

An important, and puzzling, aspect of Chinese commentary on the superpower relationship is their public assessment of the relative power (in the senses discussed in Chapter I) of the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Throughout the sixties, it was almost universally assumed -- People's War and the "Paper Tiger" notwithstanding -- that the U.S. was superior in both strength and will. In the seventies, however, with the alterations in the Vietnam situation, it appears that the contentionists found it possible to buttress their case by assuring the collusionists that the U.S. was nowhere near so strong as it had been, while at the same time preserving the conviction, among those in their own ranks to whom it was a matter of genuine concern, that the U.S. was still quite capable of serving as a counterbalance to Soviet power. We find the theme of the weakening of U.S. power clearly stated in the Kunming Documents, together with the repeated assurance that U.S. contention with the Soviets in other regions of the world will lessen the military pressure on China. Events later in 1973 helped to support this position; whether, from the viewpoint of 1976 and later, the contentionists will have come to doubt their earlier belief that the U.S. has the will and the strength to counterbalance Soviet expansion, and whether at some point Chinese rhetoric about the decline of the U.S. into "strategic passivity" has become or will become the expression of an authentic and

widespread conviction rather than a political pose, is a question that assumes increasing importance in the formulation of U.S. policy impacting on China; it is basic to the analysis of the remaining events discussed in this study.

B. EDUCATING THE MILITARY: THE KUNMING DOCUMENTS

The nature of the issues which concerned the Chinese leadership in the period leading up the 1973 Tenth Party Congress showed clearly in a confidential Chinese Communist document entitled "Outline of Education on Situation For Companies," which was published in Taiwan in June 1974.<sup>1</sup> The "Education on Situation" campaign is said to have been going on in China since President Nixon's visit in 1972, and the document in question, dating from March-April 1973, was specifically directed at the Army. It was distributed by the Propaganda Division of the Political Department of the Kunming Military Region.

Of its five sections, three are devoted to the international situation. The first lesson is designed to answer doubts about the nature of the overall international situation. It surveys revolutionary developments in Vietnam, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East and describes a hunger for revolution among the people of both the United States and the Soviet Union. That the Soviet Union was now relegated to the ranks of the revisionists was unsettling to some Chinese; and the contemplation of undisguised Soviet hostility towards China, disquieting to others. In an effort to allay these perplexities, the document turns to an explanation of the significance of "the adverse current of the revisionist clique headed by the Soviet Union," offering the perplexed reader the fortifying observation that the genuine communist movement is now stronger in the same way that the Red Army was stronger when it arrived in Shensi after the Long March (with its numbers eroded from 300,000 men to 30,000 men) -- by virtue of being ideologically purer and better prepared for struggle.<sup>2</sup> Discouragement among the military over policies calculated to further exacerbate Sino-Soviet disaffection must have been considerable if an observation of this sort was intended to serve as a tonic.

It is significant that the next matter explained is the signing of the peace treaty in Vietnam. To some, and particularly to certain Army units stationed near the fighting in Southeast Asia, it seemed a grave error and a betrayal of the revolutionary struggle to enter into an agreement with the United States. The rationale offered in the documents is that the armistice symbolizes to world revolutionaries the triumph of a weak country over a strong country, that it removes U.S. troops from Vietnam and that it makes the "game on the Southeast Asian chessboard" playable again, by causing such countries as Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines to doubt the wisdom of exclusive ties with the United States. Once launched upon the geopolitical question, the document offers an outline sketch of international politics that is unlike anything found in the official Chinese press.

"In the past, Soviet revisionism intervened in Southeast Asia under the pretext of supporting Vietnam. Now that the Vietnam conflict has stopped, we can, by working harder, more effectively expose and strike at Soviet revisionism."

The Soviet Union has pursued deceitful policies in Vietnam: "one of its objectives was to place several hundred thousand U.S. imperialist troops at the gate of our country to threaten our security and contain our forces. Its second objective was to have the United States pinned down in Vietnam, to contain the U.S. forces so that it could contend with U.S. imperialism for hegemony. Now that the Vietnam war has stopped, this ideal plan of Soviet revisionism has come to nought, which is indeed a blow to it. Furthermore, U.S. imperialism will shift its forces from Vietnam to Europe, the Middle East and other regions to contend with Soviet revisionism for hegemony. In this way the contradictions between them will become acute."

A pivotal issue of the contentionists-collusionist debate is presented here. American involvement in Vietnam represented unwitting collusion with the Soviet Union and presented a major threat to Chinese security. The end of American involvement in Vietnam represents the end of this collusion and sets the stage for an intensified contention with the Soviet Union in other parts of the world--which will take the pressure off of China.<sup>3</sup>

The first lesson concludes with the observation that the Vietnam question will be settled either by peaceful means or, more probably, by war. "Our troops are stationed in the southwestern border region of the motherland. We must pay close attention to developments in the Vietnamese situation."

and be ready to fight at all times." This statement suggests that pressure by the military for a more active role in Vietnam was one factor in the military debate of November 1972. But were the Chinese prepared to go into Vietnam merely to impose a settlement upon the Vietnamese? Were they aiming at territorial expansion? Were they expecting to be attacked? Or were they expecting Soviet involvement in Vietnam to replace American involvement? The audience is urged never to forget why the situation is "so excellent" (because to be under pressure is good for morale) and is admonished to dig tunnels, store grain, and never seek hegemony.<sup>4</sup>

The second lesson sets forth the reasons for considering the Soviet Union as the "Number One Enemy." The main reason: "U.S. imperialism's counter-revolutionary global strategy has met with repeated setbacks; its aggressive power has been weakened; and hence, it has had to make some retraction and adjustment of its strategy. Soviet revisionism, on the other hand, is stretching its arms in all directions and is expanding desperately. It is more crazy, adventurist and deceptive." In Asia, the document continues, the Soviets have:

- (1) Instigated India against Pakistan,
- (2) Tried to undermine Chinese relations with Vietnam,
- (3) Supported Lon Nol in Cambodia,
- (4) Opposed the peaceful reunification of Korea,
- (5) Tried to drag Japan to their side and keep her away from China,
- (6) Intensified infiltration into Afghanistan, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore,
- (7) Had designs on Taiwan.

"We can see very clearly that all actions of Soviet revisionism in Asia are intended to encircle China. Its spearhead is pointed at us in an attempt to achieve a great strategic encirclement of us."<sup>5</sup>

Turning to the question of Europe, the author describes Soviet exploitation of Eastern Europe, along with its military buildup there for the purpose of expanding into western Europe and the Mediterranean. Moscow is accused of using relaxation of European tension and the Conference on



European Security and Cooperation for the purpose of "consolidating its sphere of influence in Europe as far as possible, dividing NATO, and expelling U.S. influence from Europe." More important to the Chinese, European relaxation serves to "maintain temporary stability in the West so that it may increase its strength to confront us." <sup>6</sup> This is an explicit statement of the idea that contention lessens the likelihood of Sino-Soviet war.

Soviet proposals for disarmament, about which "some comrades are not clear" are next systematically refuted. The SALT agreements are declared a fraud, because the Soviets have undertaken a qualitative race with the United States, focusing on multiple warheads. The proposal for non-use of force in international relations is described as worthless in the light of Russia's invasion of Czechoslovakia and Soviet support for India against Pakistan. The "permanent ban of nuclear weapons" and the "ban of all nuclear tests" are similarly worthless. The lesson then summarizes data on Soviet forces on the Sino-Soviet border and points out that Soviet strength in the Indian Ocean will allow the Soviet navy to move quickly, via the Suez Canal, between the Mediterranean and the Pacific. Apparently this view of Soviet intentions is not shared in all quarters: "some comrades wrongly think that the situation is relaxed, that hostility has decreased, and that they can take things easy in war preparation." The writer insists, "we must overcome ideas resulting from benumbing by peace and make ourselves a hundred times more vigilant." <sup>7</sup>

The aim of the third lesson is to identify China's new state-to-state dealings since 1971--in particular her entry into the United Nations, the Nixon visit and the establishment of relations with Japan and West Germany as "Chairman Mao's revolutionary diplomatic line". Maximum attention is devoted to justifying the holding of talks with the United States. The author first stigmatizes, as a slander emanating from domestic and foreign reactionaries, the view that talks with the United States represent "collusion between China and the United States" or "alliance with the United States against the Soviet Union." Some within the revolutionary ranks have been taken in by this viewpoint and are wondering whether China has changed

her policy. The document argues that U.S.-Soviet talks, which constituted collusion, and Sino-U.S. talks are "alike in form but different in essence." The invitation of Nixon to China is in reality not a case of pragmatic state-to-state dealing, but an effort to establish people-to-people contact with the United States, using Nixon as a stepping-stone. This formulation transforms Peking's new state-to-state diplomacy into its opposite, the support of domestic revolutionary movements, and thus preempts the arguments of collusionists who advocate a primary policy of support for revolution.<sup>8</sup>

The document then describes (in state-to-state terms) the benefits of this new "diplomatic offensive," describing it as a means of fighting for the overthrow of both U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism, not by fighting them simultaneously or by allying with one against the other, but by exploiting their contradictions "in the light of changes in situations, tipping the scale diversely at different times"--all in all, a fair definition of balance-of-power politics.<sup>9</sup>

Four benefits are cited for the new policy. First, it checkmates the Soviet aim of bringing China into conflict with the United States. Second, it curbs U.S.-Soviet collusion and aggravates the contradictions between them. This advantage is seen as deriving from the Vietnam ceasefire, which frees U.S. forces from Asia and makes them available to contend with the Soviets in other areas of the world. U.S.-Soviet contention "will weaken their strength, and keep them from taking reckless and impetuous actions to start a war"--a reiteration of the theme that U.S.-Soviet contention makes Sino-Soviet (or Sino-U.S.) war less likely. The third benefit of China's diplomatic offensive is that it weakens the ties between the United States and its Asian allies, and the fourth that it weakens the position of the Taiwanese and is favorable to the liberation of Taiwan--although not necessarily in the immediate future.<sup>10</sup>

The invitation of Japanese Premier Tanaka to visit China is treated in similar terms: first, as a revolutionary overture to the people of Japan, and secondly, as a move to exploit Japan's contradictions with the Soviet Union and the United States and bring her closer to China. Both the United States and the Soviet Union are said to view Japan as a bridgehead for a

possible war against China, and as a key link in the strategic encirclement of China.<sup>11</sup>

C. IMPLICATIONS OF THE KUNMING DOCUMENTS

It is clear that the Kunming Documents are not a direct reflection of high-level debate. They seem to be directed primarily at correcting certain long-standing and uncritically accepted traditional views among the lower echelons of the military. These include: 1) an attitude of friendship, or at least of non-enmity, towards the Soviet Union, which in the past had been a friend; 2) a profound suspicion of the United States (deriving from the Korean War and nourished by the Vietnam War) and a conviction that no good could come of dealing with it; 3) a tendency to accept at face value Soviet declarations of peaceful intent and willingness to undertake treaties on disarmament and non-use of force; 4) a lack of interest in military and political developments outside the sphere of immediate Chinese interests, coupled with more or less incomprehension of the principles of geopolitics. (An article in Red Flag in December 1972 introduced the concepts of geopolitics to the general public). We may assume that discontent among the holders of these views had been encouraged by various interest groups for their own purposes.

On the other hand, the documents show that their authors were well aware of many aspects of Soviet and US "grand strategy" and of opportunities for the Chinese in the global game.

The analysis of Soviet aims is quite detailed and treats the importance to Soviet planning of 1) strategic encirclement of China, 2) fostering US-Chinese confrontation, 3) keeping the US pinned down in Vietnam while the Soviet Union expands its influence unhindered in other areas, and 4) using the Indian Ocean as a sea lane linking its naval power in the Pacific and the Mediterranean. The corresponding US interest in extricating itself from Vietnam, and the strategic importance of Japan to both nations are also described. From the point of view of Chinese opportunities, the

documents give prominent attention to the benefits to China of the weakening of US influence in Northeast and Southeast Asia, and to the importance of US-Soviet contention in Europe and the Middle East in keeping the resources and attention of the two superpowers (especially the Soviet Union) occupied in spheres far removed from China.

D. THE LINE OF THE TENTH PARTY CONGRESS

The Tenth Party Congress was finally held, in secrecy, on August 24-28, 1973. The policy decisions arrived at by the leadership in the preceding months were embodied in Chou En-lai's report to the Congress. It contained some surprises.

The first of these was the revival of the "collusion" motif:

"Today, it is mainly the two nuclear superpowers - the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. - that are contending for hegemony. While hawking disarmament, they are actually expanding their armaments every day. Their purpose is to contend for world hegemony. They contend as well as collude with each other. Their collusion serves the purpose of more intensified contention. Contention is absolute and protracted, whereas collusion is relative and temporary."<sup>12</sup>

The primary development in the U.S.-Soviet relationship tending to strengthen the hand of the collusionists was the impending opening of the MBFR talks, with their potential for producing major shifts in the Europe-USSR-China military balance; in addition the European Security (CSCE) Conference was already in session. Almost as important to the collusionist case was the resumption of the SALT talks on March 12th and the visit of Leonid Brezhnev to Washington in June, during which the U.S. and the Soviet Union committed themselves to work out agreements on offensive arms in 1974 and agreed to enter into urgent consultations with each other should the risk of nuclear conflict arise. During the visit, President Nixon accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union in 1974.

If, as has been suggested, the perception of increasing danger of Sino-Soviet war also tends to strengthen the hand of the collusionists, one may identify several other circumstances as relevant to the resurgence of

the collusionist position. The secrecy under which the Party Congress was held testifies to a considerable fear of disruption. There were rumors in the autumn that the Soviet Union planned to convene a conference of communist parties in order to read the Chinese out of the international communist movement. Also reflective of the general tenor of Sino-Soviet relations at the time were the maneuvers of the Soviet Far Eastern forces, held (according to Peking) on the Sino-Soviet border two months after the Party Congress; these maneuvers reportedly involved about forty-five divisions and included ten thousand tanks.<sup>13</sup>

Chou's report expressed concern about the danger of invasion. He referred twice to China as "an attractive piece of meat" which the superpowers would like to devour. At the same time, he partially discounted the possibility by twice insisting that those who would like to "bite into" China would find it too tough.<sup>14</sup> More significantly, he introduced for the first time the theme that the Soviet Union is not primarily interested in China, but is "making a feint to the East while attacking in the West" and "stepping up contention in Europe and... expansion in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and every place [its] hands can reach."<sup>15</sup> This statement amounts to a prediction that the Soviets would be too preoccupied with Europe to attack China in the near future. It expresses in stronger form what was already implicit in the earlier assertion that Europe is the "focus of superpower contention," and like that earlier assertion it is intended to serve as a rebuttal to collusionist arguments. It is doubtful whether many collusionists were convinced; the inclusion of the "feint in the East" statement in Chou's report to the Party Congress most likely signifies that the contentionists (who in spite of the conventional name we give them are a political faction with positions on all the issues facing the Chinese leadership) had maintained their ascendancy in the broader political process and thus were enabled to assert their viewpoint, over opposition, in the narrower arena of "superpower-watching." Part of the price they paid for the right to assert this viewpoint and to continue the policies which it symbolized, seems to have been the introduction of the term "collusion" into Chou's report.

There may have been a third motive behind the resurrection of the collusion analysis. We know that, in some quarters, Chinese contacts with the United States were denounced as "collusion," with an implicit criticism of their advocates; to revive the theme of U.S.-Soviet collusion briefly would take the wind out of these critics' sails. Chou made a point of addressing the question: "We should point out here that necessary compromise between Soviet revisionism and U.S. imperialism."<sup>16</sup>

The political risk to the contentionists in permitting a resurgence of the collusionist viewpoint was limited. Chou's statement, quoted above, carefully circumscribed its applicability by insisting on collusion's temporary and relative nature. Developments which would further strengthen the contentionist analysis were beginning to occur in the military arenas. The issue of Peking Review that contained the documents of the Tenth Party Congress also quoted the U.S. press on the success of new Soviet efforts in the development of multiple-warhead technology.<sup>17</sup> In a speech at the U.N. on October 2, Ch'iao Kuan-hua himself asserted that Soviet nuclear tests after the June agreements had destabilized the situation and that contention was continuing. In addition, by means of some deft logical juggling, he managed to depict the U.S.-Soviet agreement on "urgent consultations" as

"derived from the so-called principle which they agreed upon in 1972 that the Soviet Union and the United States have 'security interests based on the principle of equality.' What is meant by 'security interests based on the principle of equality'? To put it bluntly, it means rivalry for world hegemony -- wherever one goes, the other will do the same."<sup>18</sup>

This combination of logical acrobatics and the utilization of actual developments in the superpower relationship may have already been reducing the strength of the collusionist analysis by the time Ch'iao made his speech. But the gradual progress of the contentionists' attack and the revival by the collusionists of their theme were quickly thrown into a vastly different environment four days after Ch'iao's speech by the sudden outbreak of the October War in the Middle East, whose developments at first seemed to support the collusionist case, but ultimately swept it away.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE OCTOBER WAR AND THE WORLDWIDE MILITARY ALERT

#### A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter describes the initial Chinese reaction to the event which overshadowed all others in its impact on Chinese assessment of the superpower relationship, and which ultimately made it clear to the Chinese that the major issues of the debate over that relationship had shifted. What began as one more in a series of superpower encounters in various regions of the world quickly escalated into a major contest of will between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. While the parties to the contention-collusion debate at first treated the evidence of the October War according to well-worn precedent, in the aftermath of the U.S. worldwide military alert the collusionists realized that their line of argument would soon lose its usefulness as a cover for other political aims, while the contentionists were faced with contention that exceeded expectations and raised the question of China's fate in the event of superpower war.

#### B. INITIAL REACTIONS TO THE OCTOBER WAR

Chinese reactions focused upon four aspects of the October War in the Middle East: the war itself, including Soviet and U.S. airlifts of supplies to the Arab states and Israel respectively; the urgent visit of Secretary of State Kissinger to Moscow at the request of the Soviets on October 20; the passage by the Security Council of a cease fire resolution, proposed jointly by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, on October 22nd; and the worldwide alert declared for U.S. military forces on October 25th in reaction to a Soviet threat to send troops to the Mideast.

Of these four aspects, the war itself was probably the least important to the Chinese. Although it provided the opportunity for a massive propaganda offensive on behalf of the Arabs, as an indicator of superpower inter-



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action it could be interpreted by both the collusionists and contentionists according to the lines they had already laid down for analysis of the preceding stalemate. The contentionists could simply point to superpower involvement on opposite sides; the collusionists depicted the war as a continuation of the superpower policy of colluding to maintain tension and prevent resolution in the Middle East, in order to serve common superpower interests. Further evidence for this collusionist viewpoint was afforded by the shepherding of the ceasefire resolution through the Security Council by the United States and the Soviet Union. Secretary Kissinger's visit to Moscow two days before the passage of this resolution also strengthened the collusionist position, although it was interpreted by the contentionists, particularly in view of later events, as an instance of U.S. application of pressure upon the Soviet Union.

Ultimately, the confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union which culminated in President Nixon's declaration of a worldwide "defense condition three" alert (extending to the strategic nuclear forces) overshadowed all other aspects of the October War as a measure of the intensity of superpower conflict, a symbol of the dynamics of the superpower competition, and an indicator of American intentions and will. So critical and far-reaching were the implications of this confrontation that a policy discussion within the Chinese leadership was required before any faction dared to publicly comment on it. Accordingly, the Chinese studiously avoided any mention of the global military alert for more than two months after it occurred; the hammering out of an official position apparently took place during the discussions which customarily accompany the drafting of the New Year's message, and it was in the 1974 New Year's message that the alert was first mentioned.

The period between the outbreak of the Mideast War and the adoption of an official policy regarding it is a significant one, for during this period the parties to the strategic debate were faced with the task of reconciling their various positions to a vastly altered set of circumstances, without the guidance of official policy declared at the highest level.

The pursuit of the collusion analysis, subject to certain constraints, had been authorized at the Tenth Party Congress, and the initial comment on the war by the People's Daily commentator stated that the Soviet Union and the U.S. were contending and colluding with each other in the Middle East, without adducing any of the events of the war as evidence.<sup>1</sup> But by October 11th, Chou En-lai, who had enunciated the "contention and collusion" formula at the Tenth Party Congress, took an unequivocal contentionist line. In a speech welcoming Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau to China, he described the superpowers as "contending for world hegemony" and "scheming against each other, digging at the cornerstone of each other's edifice and willfully encroaching on the independence and sovereignty of other countries."<sup>2</sup> Although he did not specifically mention the Middle East war, his remarks could not fail to be taken as a comment upon it, especially since the figure of "digging at the cornerstone of each other's edifice" represented the first clear characterization of the competition as a zero-sum game and, as such, was a noticeable escalation of contentionist rhetoric on the subject. In making this statement, Chou was taking his own line rather than following a consensual line such as the one that came out of the Tenth Party Congress; events were to vindicate his stand.

A few days later, a People's Daily editorial restated the collusion theme:

"The superpowers lost no time in reproaching and hindering the struggle of the Egyptian, Syrian and Palestinian people for hitting back [sic] at the aggressors. One superpower raised the outcry that 'relaxation' is 'faced with a dangerous development of events'; the other superpower demanded that the Egyptian and Syrian troops return to the positions they held before they struck back at the Israeli aggressors.... Now they vilify the struggle of the Egyptian, Syrian and Palestinian armed forces and people against the aggressors on their own sacred territory as 'a dangerous development of events' and try by hook or by crook to stifle the struggle. This precisely shows that in peddling so-called 'relaxation' the superpowers want the Arab and Palestinian people to stop fighting, to manacle them and leave them at the aggressors' mercy... What the superpowers do indicates that they are at once contending and colluding with each other in the Middle East and are trying their utmost to reimpose a 'no war, no peace' situation on the Arab people."<sup>3</sup>

On October 21st, during Security Council debate on the ceasefire resolution introduced by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Chinese representative Huang Hua referred to superpower "contention as well as collusion in the Middle East and their attempt to impose the situation of 'no war, no peace again on the Arab people.'" Then, referring to Secretary Kissinger's visit to Moscow and citing some of Kissinger's earlier public statements, he declared, "the U.S. government has constantly put pressure on the Soviet revisionist leading clique and intimidated it." The effect of this statement was to make the evidence weigh more heavily on the side of the contentionists.<sup>4</sup>

The People's Daily editorial of October 26th is unlikely to have contained any reaction to the alert; the official announcement of it would have reached Peking only in the evening of the 25th, so that any reaction in the next day's paper would have had to be literally instant analysis. However, after describing the "scheme of the two superpowers in the last fortnight or so to resort to power politics and work together to put out the raging flames of the Arab people's just war against aggression," and sounding the notes of both contention and collusion, the writer addresses the Soviet Union: "When the other superpower brought pressure to bear upon you and made threats, you immediately coupled coercion with deception to tell people to 'ceasefire in place.'"<sup>5</sup> The threats and pressure in question are probably statements made by Secretary Kissinger after October 12th;<sup>6</sup> the phrasing of the statement clearly places them before the ceasefire in place, the resolution for which passed the Security Council on October 22nd.

While coercion would certainly seem to imply contention, in the present context it seems to be pressed into the service of the collusionist analysis. As used in the Chinese policy debate, "collusion" need not imply the active collaboration of two parties; it can imply also the passive connivance of one party at the actions of the other, or the state of affairs in which one party acts as a cat's-paw for the interests of the other. In the 60's, the heyday of the collusionists analysis, it was common for the Chinese to

deride the Soviets for knuckling under to American intimidation. The present article may be an attempt to harken back to that earlier state of affairs, and so strengthen the case of the collusionists.

Foreign Minister Chi P'eng-fei also distanced himself from the collusionists' viewpoint, although his position was not as unequivocal as Chou's had been. Welcoming a delegation from Sudan on October 27th, he referred to the U.S.-Soviet ceasefire resolution as "contending while collaborating," avoiding the use of the politically charged term "collusion."<sup>7</sup> As the American global alert had been declared two days previously, the position he implicitly supported had undoubtedly gained strength.

After the details of the U.S. global alert had become known, there was some slackening in the tempo of the collusionist line. Chou En-lai, on the other hand, sailed serenely ahead on his chosen course. On October 31st, at a banquet in honor of Australian Prime Minister Whitlam, Chou declared:

"The essence of the Middle East issue is the contention of the superpowers for hegemony over this region. The superpowers are now trying hard to impose the solution that they have concocted on the Arab people, including the Palestinian people. Even if they may appear to succeed for a time, they are doomed to failure. Tensions and turbulence will continually reoccur in the Middle East."<sup>8</sup>

While this statement made no mention of the military alert, it asserted that the essence of the Middle East issue was contention and only contention, and asserted that superpower attempts at collusion would be of no importance in the future.

Chou went on to make a surprising remark: "The superpowers of our day who seek to ride roughshod over others and act as overlords on the strength of the few atom bombs they possess will definitely end up no better [than those who practiced hegemony and expansionism in the past]."<sup>9</sup> Belittling of the effects of atomic weapons is usually associated with Mao's attempt to increase the intensity of American Soviet confrontation in 1957, and with Lin Piao's People's War statements of 1965. It seems likely that Chou had in mind, as he made the statement, the possibilities of both superpower confrontation and superpower attack on China, but he seems to have been using

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them as part of a quite different argument. His message was probably that China's interest in superpower competition was not decreased by the possibility of war between the superpowers, because the effect of an atomic war between them on China would be small; either the superpowers would use the bombs they had upon each other and have none to spare for China, or, if atomic weapons did fall on China, they would not be able to seriously affect Chinese fighting capabilities. Apparently there were within the leadership those who feared the effects of extreme superpower contention upon China as well as those who feared the effects of superpower collusion.

CHAPTER VI - REFERENCES

[ NOTE: Reference to FBIS indicates foreign press materials translated or reprinted in FBIS Daily Report (China). ]

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2. FBIS, 12 October 1973, pp. A7-A8.
3. "Arab People's Cause Against Aggression Is Invincible," translated in FBIS, 15 October 1973, pp. A9-A10.
4. FBIS, 24 October 1973, p. A3.
5. "Naked Display of Power Politics," translated in FBIS, 26 October 1973, pp. 21-A2.
6. Quoted in Peking Review #43, 26 October 1973, p. 12.
7. FBIS, 29 October 1973, pp. A11-A13.
8. Peking Review #45, 9 November 1973, pp. 4-5.
9. Ibid.
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CHAPTER VII

1974: BROADENING POLITICAL STRUGGLE

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The effect of the October War and the U.S. worldwide military alert was profound. By rendering the contention-collusion debate virtually useless as an instrument for influencing the broader Chinese political arena, it forced political debate over both external and domestic matters to adopt new guises; by confronting the Chinese leadership with an example of the potential for violent collusion in the superpower relationship, it forced the strategic debate to take greater cognizance of the ultimate consequences of superpower rivalry, and of China's involvement in them. Much of the struggle over domestic political issues was absorbed into the Confucius-Lin Piao campaign; but the issue of the superpower relationship and its effect on China's strategic environment seems to have remained, for most of 1974, a separate issue. The focal points of media debate on this issue (which were stated with varying degrees of explicitness) were: Which superpower is ahead in strategic arms? Have the superpowers "few" or "many" nuclear weapons? Can the U.S. check the expansion of Soviet influence? It seems likely that questions of force structure and strategy took on an increased urgency in 1974 and underlay much of the debate about the strategic weapons aspect of the superpower relationship. As regards the territorial contest for influence and control, the prevailing opinion seems to have been that American will and power still provided an effective counterbalance to the Soviets. American performance in the Middle East, in particular, was impressive to the Chinese. There were a certain number of strident assertions of the decline of American power, but these are more likely to have formed part of an argument that the U.S. was not an excessively dangerous nation to have dealings with than to have represented a belief that American influence in the world was indeed on the wane. It is only recently, with the appearance of "capitulationism" in the Chinese pantheon of aberrations, that any evidence has fostered the suspicion



that there are elements in the Chinese leadership (broadly defined) who doubt the ability of the U.S. to counterbalance Soviet power and are inclined to consider settling their differences with the Soviets.

B. BROADENING POLITICAL STRUGGLE

The year 1974 was a year of intensified and broadened debate, much of it conducted in areas and with terms that are far removed from the contentionist-collusionist debate and are difficult to connect with major visible developments in Chinese policy (such as the Chinese efforts to establish control over the Paracels in the South China Sea, or the sudden and unannounced transfers of eight military region commanders at the beginning of the year), or with external events. The first two-thirds of the year brought no major crises about which debate could coalesce; comment on the superpower relationship primarily took the form of continuing analysis of continuing processes, such as the course of American and Soviet diplomacy in the Middle East and of the SALT II negotiations. Even the Cyprus crisis which called forth a large volume of propaganda from the Chinese, seems not to have provided an important point-of inflection in the debate about the superpower interaction.

Nonetheless, the fact of intense internal debate was the most observable feature of Chinese activity for most of 1974. A campaign against the thought of Confucius, which began at the time of the Tenth Party Congress in August 1973, and was probably the product of the internal maneuverings that led up to the Congress, was linked early in the year with a campaign against Lin Piao, which had existed for some time in various forms and was then being conducted under the rubric "criticize Lin Piao and rectify work style." The first press reports on the combined campaign appeared at the beginning of February, but it was another month or two before it picked up significant momentum. The terms in which the debate was conducted seem to have been highly flexible and to have been put to a wide variety of uses by different factions.

It was widely supposed, for example, that Chou En-lai was one of the main targets of the campaign against Confucius. But in November 1973, before the Confucius campaign had been linked with the anti-Lin Piao campaign, an article in Red Flag clearly put Chou on the side of the Legalists, who figured as the anti-Confucian party in the historical analysis.<sup>1</sup> The article praised a Legalist minister who had followed the good Legalist policy of making alliances with distant states against neighboring states, rather than making alliances with neighboring states against distant states -- a clear reference to Chou's policy of dealing with the U.S. rather than with the Soviet Union. Chou then could then be put on the side of the angels in the anti-Confucian debate by identifying his pragmatism with the policies of the Legalists.

On the other hand, an article published in April 1974 expanded upon Lin Piao's alleged "illicit relations with a foreign power" as follows: "Internationally, imperialism and social-imperialism, in trying to subvert and invade our socialist motherland, also want to buy over those who have illicit relations with foreign countries and who are willing to be their puppet emperors."<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the reference to attempts by imperialism (i.e., the United States) to buy agents in China is a reference to Chou's policies of closer relations with the United States.

On the whole, however, the pervasive Confucius-Lin Piao discussions show no clear and consistent connection with debate over the superpower relationship as it has been traced in this study. They are best viewed as an attempt by certain groups to realize, through a different line of attack, domestic political ends that had been unattainable in such debates as that between the contentionists and the collusionists.

The contentionist-collusionist debate also continued, but on altered grounds. After the beginning of the year assertions of collusion died out, but did not disappear altogether. This suggests that the collusion analysis was not officially discredited, but was instead temporarily discontinued by its advocates in the face of events that made it difficult to maintain.

The extreme nature of the American-Soviet confrontation in the Middle East made it impossible to argue that they were in collusion. But the

apparent closeness of war during the course of that confrontation raised the agonizing question of what would happen to China if a new confrontation should suddenly lead to war, and how she should prepare to handle such an occurrence. This new aspect of the debate, with suddenly increased urgency, was played out in an atmosphere of tacit acquiescence in--but not acceptance of--contention as the main essence of the superpower relationship. It engaged, as much as the contentionist-collusionist debate had, the interests of all factions: pro-American and anti-American, (and pro-Soviet, if any such faction existed), various interests within the military, and those responsible for determining force structure and planning research and development, those interested primarily in internal affairs and those placing the emphasis on external affairs, state-to-state pragmatists and people-to-people ideologists. It involved considerations in both the military and the territorial arenas, and especially the overall assessment of the power and will of the superpowers.

Much of the commentary on the superpower relationship, when it was not couched in general terms, centered around the progress of American and Soviet efforts in Middle East diplomacy, and over the apparent lack of success in the SALT II negotiations. The Third World and Second World strategies were pursued by maintenance of a high level of attention to superpower rivalry in Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, as in 1973, and to the related arenas of the naval rivalry and the Law of the Sea Conference. A theme which gained considerable prominence in 1974 was that of economic exploitation of the Third World; by far the greatest attention was given to activities of the Soviet Union in this sphere, including her dealings in oil during the oil embargo, her economic relations with eastern Europe, and the conditions of her economic aid to such countries as India. The Cyprus crisis also evoked, as noted, a sizeable amount of adverse commentary the bulk of it directed against the Soviets.

C. THE SUMMING-UP OF 1973

The New Year's message for 1974 focused its attention upon superpower contention and implicitly rejected collusion as an important characteristic of that relationship. Europe was still described as the strategic focus of the contention, and warnings of a Soviet feint to the East and attack in the West continued. The events in the Middle East were described as a Soviet-U.S. "confrontation with daggers drawn"; the "myth of international detente" was now "exploded." On the other hand, lest the possible adverse consequences for China of such confrontation be exaggerated, the message went on to declare that imperialism and modern revisionism were "on the decline and riddled with crises." The Soviet Union was characterized as having "wild ambitions and not enough strength."<sup>3</sup>

The New Year's message of 1973 had focused implicitly upon superpower behavior toward the Third World, and was accompanied by a series of articles dealing with this theme in more detail. The message for 1974 dealt explicitly with superpower contention, and was accompanied by an article treating the contention theme in detail: "The World Advances Amidst Turblence" by Chung Chih-ping.<sup>4</sup>

Speaking first in general terms, the writer describes the contention as stretching from Europe to the Middle East, South Asia, the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. The zero-sum nature of the conflict is underlined by referring to Lenin's assertion that each imperialist nation tries to "weaken the adversary and undermine his hegemony." The superpowers' "overt and covert struggle" in 1973 "covered the whole world and involved all fields. From the conference hall and market to the battlefield and from the ground, sea and ocean to outer space, all are arenas of their contention." Thus all negotiations between the superpowers or their proxies are to be viewed as instances of contention rather than collusion; and economic questions - without mention of specifics - are now at least theoretically included in the analysis.

In the description of specific areas of contact, it is invariably the deeds of the Soviet Union that receive the greatest attention. In the naval

race, "the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists' buildup went up faster and their claws reached farther." In Europe, the emphasis is upon Soviet troop buildups and on their use of detente to "relax western European vigilance and elbow out the U.S." The author notes the increase in the number of Soviet warships in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, the presence of Soviet military bases in the Asian region, and "economic and military infiltration in Latin America."

The author next introduces the theme that the Soviets are "worming in everywhere"; they "follow in the footsteps" of the United States and move in wherever the United States leaves a vacuum. But they are over-extended: they "pulled in their horns when they got a counterblow." The reference is clearly to the events in the Middle East. "The global alert turned conspirators into enemies at dagger-point." Collusion, we are reminded, is temporary, while contention is protracted and absolute. Finally, the blame for starting up the nuclear race again after Brezhnev's visit to Washington is laid at the door of the Soviets.

Next, the discussion turns to another theme proclaimed in the New Year message, the enumeration of the problems faced by the two superpowers. Three problems, all of major importance, are ascribed to the United States: Vietnam, Cambodia, and the failure of the "Year of Europe." The list of Soviet problems is longer: domestic economic problems and dissent head the list, followed by a serious need to acquire dollars, difficulties in the dialogue with Europe, resistance to the Asian collective security system, and the stalemate in the peace treaty talks with Japan. After this summation, the author introduces the theme of growing Latin American awareness that Soviet activities represent imperialism as dangerous as that of the United States.

It is significant that the term "collusion" is not absolutely excluded from the Chung Chih-ping article. It is mentioned twice, each time in an abstract way rather than in a discussion of specifics. While it sets forth

the general outlines for strategic debate in 1974, the article contains elements from a wide range of viewpoints rather than coming down solidly on the side of any one party to the debate.

D. INTENSIFIED ATTENTION TO THE ARMS RACE

After the publication of the New Year's message and the separate article expounding its meaning, the debate over the superpower relationship continued, with emphasis upon the arms race. In the middle of January, a New China News Agency correspondent implicitedly attacked the collusionist viewpoint: "Some people have tried hard to present a false picture, describing 1973 as a year of peace, as a 'turning point' from tension to detente and cooperation." He refuted the idea of a relaxation in American-Soviet tension by describing a new round of the arms race following the Brezhnev visit to Washington in June, 1973: "No sooner had Washington cleared away the celebratory champagne glasses than the two parties embarked on an even fiercer round in the nuclear arms race and in the fight for global hegemony." Here the blame for the resumption of the arms race was shared by both sides rather than resting primarily with the Soviets. The author proceeded to hedge against the possibility of new U.S.-Soviet agreements on strategic weapons: "Whether they cross swords or enter into 'agreements' with each other, what they reveal is the different form of their contention for hegemony."<sup>5</sup>

The SALT talks resumed in Geneva on February 19, to the accompaniment of further commentary in the Chinese press. Peking Review for February 8 carried an article reviewing the developments since the Brezhnev visit. The author noted that the Soviets had tested MIRVs two months after the Brezhnev visit and asserted that Washington regarded this event as a sign of Soviet intentions to achieve all-round nuclear superiority. Further Soviet tests on January 25 and 26 were interpreted as evidence of the same intention. "U.S. officials" were described as advocating an acceleration of arms expansion, the revision of target strategy, and the development of new weapons

"in an attempt to maintain the so-called U.S.-Soviet 'military balance.'" The United States was portrayed as reacting to Soviet initiatives in the arms race, and its position was presented not as one of superiority but of barely maintained parity with the Soviets.<sup>6</sup>

The perception of quantity and quality as two distinct aspects of the arms race had existed since at least 1972, when it formed part of the contentionist argument that the arms race continued unabated, but in the alter form of a qualitative rather than a quantitative race, after the May 1972 SALT agreements. Chou En-lai himself had hinted at this theme in his speech to the Albanian delegation on July 17, 1972, and it was stated more specifically later in the year.<sup>7</sup> But the theme suddenly came to have more importance in early 1974 as the Chinese studied and commented upon the course of SALT II negotiations, particularly as they were reflected in the American press.

On the day that the SALT talks resumed, the Soviets fired yet another multi-warhead missile. An article appearing in Peking Review for March 1 declared that this test dispelled the idea of Soviet "sincerity" in the talks. It reviewed events prior to June 19, 1973, asserting that the Soviet Union had almost doubled its number of nuclear missiles, while the United States did not increase its number, but stepped up its research and development efforts. During SALT II, the parties were described as trying to limit each others military strength while building up their own, while outside the talks "both sides have entered a new round, competing with even greater intensity for technical superiority."<sup>8</sup>

That the Chinese now clearly perceived the two aspects, quantitative and qualitative, of the strategic arms race as in competition with each other is shown by a series of articles in 1974 dealing with the subject. The March 1 Peking Review article is an especially significant one, because unlike most of the others it suggests that the question of numbers is being dealt with inside the SALT talks, while the qualitative race goes on largely outside SALT's scope. In the Chinese view of their own security, it is probable that technical refinements are of much less concern than sheer

numbers of deliverable warheads. With a virtually non-existent missile defense and only primitive target hardening, they have little to fear from sophisticated missiles that they would not also fear from relatively crude ones. The American-Soviet qualitative arms race, unchecked by SALT agreements, would not greatly increase the threat to China, but would insure that the superpowers were compelled to devote increasing attention to each other. An agreement on numbers in the course of SALT II, on the other hand, would be advantageous to China, since it might result in a limitation of the real threat--the absolute number of Soviet nuclear missiles--while not releasing the superpowers from the pressures of their qualitative race. Thus, successful "collusion" between the superpowers in one aspect of the arms race might in fact direct superpower contention in a direction that was relatively desirable for the Chinese.

Other articles focused upon the quantitative and qualitative questions as embodiments of the divergent aims of the United States and the Soviet Union, and hence as proof that no agreement could be reached in the SALT negotiations. At the same time, these articles typified the increased Chinese interest in discussing specific details of the superpower nuclear balance, suggesting how far their interest had shifted from the question or whether the United States and the Soviets could manage to get together in general on an agreement to an interest in what the specific dynamics of the arms race and arms negotiations portended for their relationship and for the future of China. An article in the People's Daily of May 24 set out the qualitative-quantitative competition in the SALT talks in detail:

"As soon as the second phase of SALT began, the U.S. Congress demanded that in its talks with the Soviet Union, the U.S. Government should not be in an inferior position but maintain forever U.S. nuclear arms superiority in the "permanent agreement". The United States openly pointed out during the talks that "the United States is not in a position to tolerate the numerical advantages presently possessed by the Soviet Union". The United States wanted the Soviet Union to reduce the number of its inter-continental missiles, in order to maintain an "essential equivalence" with the United States. But, the Soviet revisionists, on the pretext of maintaining the "basic principle of equal security", called for the "freezing" of the quota on the



number of missiles stipulated in the "agreement," in an attempt to keep its lead in the number of inter-continental missiles. The Soviet revisionists tried to limit by every means the technical development of U.S. nuclear weapons and strategic bombers carrying nuclear warheads, while leaving unimpaired its own superiority in throw-weight. At the same time, the United States wanted to limit the Soviet advantage on throw-weight, while leaving intact its superiority in nuclear technique. The limitation of multiple independently targetable missiles was the key issue of the second phase of SALT. Fearing that the Soviet revisionists would surpass it on this matter, the United States called for cessation of multiple-warheads missile tests by the two sides, while on the contrary the Soviet revisionists demanded a ban on deployment, and no restriction on tests, in order to overtake the United States. Besides, the Soviet revisionists proposed a restriction on all nuclear weapons which can reach Soviet territory as strategic offensive weapons, trying in this way to limit the tactical nuclear weapons the United States deployed in Western Europe; while the United States was against this and demanded that the Soviet Union remove the intermediate range missiles it deployed in East Europe. The second phase of SALT has basically run into an impasse because of the bitter brawl. In his visit to the Soviet Union last March, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger tried but failed to make a 'conceptual breakthrough' with the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic arms...."<sup>9</sup>

Here the problem of quality versus quantity was discussed within the context of a contentionist analysis, asserting the impossibility of an agreement; but the writer made no prediction of the outcome of the race which he presented in such uncompromising terms. However, it seems that the contentionist-collusionist argument was still proceeding below the surface, for at the same time that the Chinese were devoting their attention to the implications of the qualitative-quantitative race, an August 20, People's Daily article by Chang Lin took pains to deny again, and at some length, the possibility of American-Soviet cooperation:

Contention for world hegemony is fundamental to the nature of Soviet-U.S. relations, and the contradictions between them can never be solved. It is simply not true that Soviet-U.S. relations have changed from antagonism into full development as alleged by Soviet revisionism. The so-called machine of cooperation set into motion by Soviet revisionism and U.S. imperialism and the SALT agreements simply do not portend any shift toward peace in the antagonism between them. On the contrary, they denote the increasingly sharp and antagonistic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. Soviet revisionism's reason for using "talks" and "agreements" to spread the illusion of detente is to benumb the world's people and to cover up its acute contention with U.S. imperialism.<sup>10</sup>

The target seems to be those who believed Soviet assertions of a growing cooperation with the United States. Whether they were members of the military, or radicals with a hatred of both the United States and the Soviet Union, or members of other definable groups, we can only guess.

It was suggested above that in the quantity-quality dichotomy, the Chinese were much more interested in quantity as affecting their security. In fact, the question of the numbers of weapons possessed by the superpowers, apart from their quality, received considerable attention in Chinese discussions and seems to have been the subject of an important debate. On April 3, Wang Hung-wen gave a speech at a Peking rally welcoming a visiting Cambodian delegation in which he addressed the international situation:

Our great revolutionary teacher Lenin said: "An important special feature of imperialism has been that several big powers have all tended to scramble for hegemonic power." In the world today, the two superpowers, brandishing the few atom bombs they have, are intensifying their contention for hegemony. This is determined by the nature of imperialism....

One superpower has encroached upon many places, and it is trying desperately to keep them; the other is stretching its hand to every nook and corner. The major region of their contention is in Europe. At the same time, their contention in the Middle East, the Arabworld, the Mediterranean Sea and all the way to the Indian Ocean, has been vigorous. Verbally they talk about detente, but in essence, it is contention just the same....

Lenin repeatedly said that imperialism means aggression and war. As long as imperialism exists, war is inevitable. While we are full of confidence in the future of the world, we maintain high vigilance and are prepared to fight against a surprise attack launched by social-imperialism and to smash the disturbances created by the superpowers in the world....<sup>11</sup>

This speech was reprinted in Peking Review No. 15 for 1974; the same issue carried as an annex Teng Hsiao-p'ing's speech to the UN General Assembly on April 10. As the Teng speech was also carried in the body of the next issue of Peking Review, the fact of its annexation to the previous issue bespeaks extreme haste to get it into print, and suggests that it was intended to stand beside, and in opposition to the speech of Wang Hung-wen. Comparing Teng's speech with Wang's, we find, along with some similarities, a striking difference:

The two superpowers are the biggest international exploiters and oppressors of today. They are the source of a new world war. They both possess large numbers of nuclear weapons. They carry on a keenly contested arms race, station massive forces abroad and set up military bases everywhere, threatening the independence and security of all nations....

Since the two superpowers are contending for world hegemony, the contradiction between them is irreconcilable; one either overpowers the other, or is overpowered. Their compromise and collusion can only be partial, temporary and relative, while their contention is all-embracing, permanent and absolute. In the final analysis, the so-called "balanced reduction of forces" and "strategic arms limitation" are nothing but empty talk, for in fact there is no "balance", nor can there possibly be "limitation". They may reach certain agreements, but their agreements are only a facade and a deception. At bottom, they are aiming at greater and fiercer contention. The contention between the superpowers extends over the entire globe. Strategically, Europe is the focus of their contention, where they are in constant tense confrontation. They are intensifying their rivalry in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Everyday, they talk about disarmament but are actually engaged in arms expansion. Everyday, they talk about "detente" but are actually creating tension. Wherever they contend, turbulence occurs. So long as imperialism and social-imperialism exist, there definitely will be no tranquility in the world, nor will there be "lasting peace". Either they will fight each other, or the people will rise in revolution. It is as Chairman Mao Tsetung has said: "The danger of a new world war still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today".<sup>12</sup>

While both men embrace the contentionist viewpoint (Wang explicitly), they differ over the focus of the inevitable war that is to come. Teng speaks of it in general terms, while Wang speaks specifically of a Soviet attack on China. Teng refers to the "large numbers of nuclear weapons" possessed by the superpowers, while Wang refers to their "few" atomic weapons. This striking opposition of viewpoints gains even more in interest in light of the fact that in November 1973, Chou En-lai himself had belittled the number of atomic weapons possessed by the superpowers. What is the significance of the disagreement, and why the unlikely combination of Wang and Chou paired off against Teng?

To understand this question, we must consider another theme that had come into prominence in 1974--that of the inevitability of war. This theme was implicit in the series of theoretical articles by which Shih Chün in 1972 established the principle of inevitable contention between the superpowers, but it began to be frequently asserted in explicit terms only in 1974, and particularly by Teng (although the ultimate justification was a quote, dating from 1970, of Chairman Mao: "the danger of a new world war still exists and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today".) Teng was to repeat the theme on May 25 in a speech welcoming former British Prime Minister Edward Heath: "The contention between the superpowers is growing more and more intense and is bound to lead eventually to war; either they will fight each other or the people will rise in revolution. In the end they will not be able to escape their doom."<sup>13</sup> Chou En-lai, on the other hand, referred to the superpowers on many public appearances in the first half of 1974, but did not raise the theme of the inevitability of war. Wang Hung-wen, in his speech to the Cambodians, did stress the theme. Consequently, while we find him in agreement with Chou En-lai on the "fewness" of superpower nuclear weapons, we find them disagreeing upon the inevitability of war. Wang Hung-wen and Teng, on the other hand, disagree on the "fewness" of superpower atomic weapons but agree on the inevitability of war.

Chou had identified himself with the theme that the superpowers were "beset" both at home and abroad, and also that the Soviet Union in particular had "wild ambitions but not enough strength,"<sup>14</sup> implying that neither superpower found itself in a position to undertake a war. There were also reports in the western press in 1974 that Chou had told foreign diplomats the probability of Soviet attack on China had greatly decreased. All three men accepted, at least publicly, the contentionist analysis. The focus must lie elsewhere, probably in the question of the implications for China of superpower confrontation.

Wang's position that Sino-Soviet war is likely but that the superpowers possess few atomic weapons has several implications:

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- (1) that China would not be crippled by nuclear war and hence that she could face the war on her own terms--that is, by people's war;
- (2) that China would not be hurt enough in a nuclear war with the Soviets to need American aid; and
- (3) that the number of Soviet weapons was not so large as to exclude any Chinese effort to catch up in that field or in missile defense.

Wang's cryptic formulation allows him to speak for three distinct constituencies:

- (1) those who believe that nuclear weapons are "paper tigers" and who opt for People's War;
- (2) anti-American elements who are also anti-Soviet, but who would prefer to face a Soviet attack alone rather than with help from the United States; and
- (3) proponents of high technology for China's military forces--a group that is heavily represented in Wang's Shanghai constituency.

Teng's contention that war is inevitable, but that the superpowers have many weapons, implies that a major effort in high technology is not the solution for China. His recent overtures to Europe and apparent friendliness toward the United States suggest that he views cooperation with other nations threatened by Soviet power as part of the solution to China's security problems; but the predominant notes in his statements is a sense of urgency, which is likely to be an expression of the concern of his large constituency among the general-purpose military forces over the problem of maintaining Chinese preparedness in a threat environment that is changing rapidly, and not for the better.

The implications of Chou's position that war is not inevitable and that the superpowers have few nuclear weapons are:

- (1) support of general purpose forces over strategic rocket forces (Chou is known to have a large constituency among the general purpose forces);

- (2) concentration on the allocation of China's resources to sectors other than the military;
- (3) concentration on state-to-state relations, but without a sense of urgency.

Military considerations seem to be at the heart of each of these viewpoints. A recent BDM paper<sup>15</sup> argued that in 1972 a decision was made not to press the development of an intercontinental ballistic missile, which could be targeted at the United States, but rather to aim for an effective deterrent against the Soviet Union. This decision must have occasioned dissatisfaction in many quarters, especially in segments of the military, but also among those with the strongest suspicions of the United States. The sense of urgency over the possible near-term consequences of superpower confrontations (like that at the end of the October War) reactivated this debate and probably brought forth pressures for greater efforts in the strategic nuclear arena--with corresponding opposition from general-purpose force advocates, economic rationalizers, and balance-of-power pragmatists. One may hypothesize, then, that on this particular aspect of the overall strategic debate, Chou and Teng found themselves on the same side, in opposition to expanding efforts in the strategic nuclear arena, despite their disagreements on the danger of war and the number of weapons possessed by the superpower. Wang is on the other side, in spite of his agreement with Chou that the superpowers had "few" atomic weapons.

It is clear that at this time the collusionist viewpoint still had its advocates. The last mention of collusion in 1974 was in an article published on Army Day (August 1) in Red Flag by an obscure unit of the Red Army.<sup>16</sup> Such an assertion of army collusionist sentiment may perhaps be part of the explanation of Chang Lin's strong implicit denunciation of the collusionist line on August 20. But the tone of his argument indicates that there were collusionists also among analysts of the strategic nuclear balance. They too would inevitably be proponents of a strong and extensive strategic nuclear capability.

E. CAN CONTENTION PRODUCE A VICTOR?

In view of the increased Chinese interest in the dynamics of the arms race (rather than in only its contention-collusion implications) and in the analysis of the meaning of the Mideast confrontation, it seems likely that, among the contentionists, debate had reached the point of asking: who is ahead? What are the measures of merit? and what are China's options. The theme of Soviet aggression and expansion overshadowed, in Chinese commentary, any similar assertions about the United States throughout 1974. It was probably a subject on which everyone could agree. Those who believed that the Soviet Union might soon achieve superiority over the United States (on some scale of measurement) would stress the theme as part of an argument to build up China's defenses or nuclear capability; those who believed in an extensive network of state-to-state dealings, whether they thought that the Soviets were pulling ahead or that a balance was being maintained, would wish to stress Soviet expansionism as an argument for joining together with the Third World and the Second World, and possibly the United States, against it. The argument that the Soviets would soon be ahead of the United States and that China had better jump on their bandwagon or under their nuclear umbrella does not seem to have appeared. But this position, together with the position that growing Soviet strength made an attack on China more likely, could be attacked by stressing Soviet difficulties, asserting with Chou and Teng that the Soviet Union, as well as the United States, was "beset" at home and abroad, and again with Chou that the Soviets had "wild ambitions but not enough strength." Reference to Mao's insistence that revolution might prevent war served the same purpose. The possibility of a revolution within the Soviet Union was stated in the Kunming documents, and the theme of domestic dissent in the Soviet Union, which tended to lend credibility to the idea, was stated frequently in 1974.

The official line concerning the events in the Middle East placed the United States, in People's War terms, on "active defense": although it was contracting spatially, it had, in good Maoist fashion, struck a blow at the

Soviet Union when it was overextended, forcing Moscow to "pull in its horns."<sup>17</sup> As the Chinese followed the course of Mideast diplomacy in early 1974, they concluded that the United States was clearly winning there. Two articles stressed this theme.<sup>18</sup> It might be argued that the authors of these articles wished to assert that since the United States was winning the spatial contest (and probably not losing the strategic nuclear game) Washington was an inappropriate partner for Peking in balance-of-power diplomacy. However, both articles stressed that the Soviets would not reconcile themselves to being shut out of the Middle East and were preparing to counterattack--a suggestion that tensions were about to rise again, that the present favorable position of the United States might soon be altered or that a Soviet counterattack might come in China's immediate sphere of interest: Northeast or Southeast Asia.

In the rest of the world, developments seemed to support the contentionists and, within their number, those who believed that the United States would continue to act as an effective counterforce to Soviet expansion. Articles in the Chinese press generally argued that there was an impasse in Europe, that both parties consciously aimed at contending there, that it was still the focus of their contention, and that Soviet interest in Asia was only a "feint to the east." Secretary Schlesinger undoubtedly strengthened the hand of the contentionists (and of those who believed that Soviet power would be counterbalanced in Europe and could not be turned against China) by stating that U.S.-Soviet parity in strategic weapons would imply an increased United States interest in NATO.<sup>19</sup> The apparent lack of progress at both the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction talks and the Conference on European Security and Cooperation had the same effect. In his United Nations General Assembly speech of April 3, Teng Hsiao-p'ing had taken a strong contentionist line on these talks (and on the SALT negotiations), asserting that there could be neither "balance" in Europe nor "limitation"<sup>20</sup> in strategic arms--both comforting ideas for contentionists who believed that China would not be seriously hurt by superpower confrontation.

Progress on Taiwan was slow, but the hand of those who believed in dealing with the United States was undoubtedly strengthened by reports on



August 7 that the United States had withdrawn half of its F-4 Phantom jets stationed on Taiwan.<sup>21</sup> In Latin America the perception of Soviet pressure continued, alleviated only partially by the fall of Salvador Allende in Chile the previous September. There too, both the contentionists, who wished Soviet forces committed in as many places--distant from Asia--as possible, and those who asserted that American will could maintain the balance against Soviet expansion, were able to adduce a heightened degree of American counterpresence in the area in support of their thesis.<sup>22</sup>

F. THE ISSUE IN 1974: A RECAPITULATION

The debate over the superpower relationship in 1974 took place in the context of a larger debate over domestic political issues. The contentionist-collusionist debate had been all but won by the contentionists following the Middle East war of October 1973, but within the contentionist ranks (now probably joined, out of expediency, by many former collusionists) debate in 1974 focused upon new questions:

Was contention getting out of hand?

How might China protect herself from the consequences of superpower confrontation?

Might contention suddenly result in clear superiority for one or the other of the superpowers?

In what terms should superiority be defined?

How should China respond to a situation where one superpower becomes predominant?

During the course of the debate, much attention was devoted to the details and the dynamics of the U.S.-Soviet arms race, and to the weighing of United States will and influence against pervasive and determined Soviet expansionism. The ultimate outcome of the debate will have far-reaching implications for overall Chinese strategy and future Chinese military and diplomatic posture.

CHAPTER VII - REFERENCES

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